



विद्या प्रसारक मंडळ, ठाणे

Title	: Hinduism of Upanishads
Author	: Narayana. J.V.
Publisher	: Madras : Sri Swami Sivananda Sarswati
Publication Year	: 1951
Pages	: 662 pgs.

गणपुस्तक

विद्या प्रसारक मंडळाच्या

“ग्रंथालय” प्रकल्पांतर्गत निर्मिती

गणपुस्तक निर्मिती वर्ष : 2014

गणपुस्तक क्रमांक : 035

Please also circulate this among your friends, assistants and students.

THE HINDUISM OF THE UPANISHADS.—The Science of Brahman or Hindu Theism. **A Modern Scientific Exposition** of the Twelve Ancient Classical Srutis—Crown Octavo—Pp. 644 + X—Part I—Exposition—22 Chapters—Pp. 494. Part II—Texts (English) with Notes—12 Chapters—Pp. 150. Stiff-Cloth-Bound with multi-coloured pictures of the Pancha Rishis, the Founders of Brahma Vidya or the Science of Brahman. Rs. 6-8-0. Postage Extra. This book is specially intended for students of High Schools and Colleges and beginners in the study of Religion. By **Diwan Bahadur J. Venkata Narayana Nayudu, B.A., B.L., C.I.E., Retired Law and Education Secretary to the Government of Madras.** Copies can be had of (1) The Sunday Times Book Shop, Peters Road, Cathedral P.O., Madras-6. (2) Messrs. Higginbothams, Mount Road, Madras-2, their Branches and Railway Station Book-Stalls. (3) The Author, Venkata Vilas, 2/11, Orme's Road, Kilpauk, Madras-10.

A FEW OF THE MANY APPRECIATIONS.

Announcement of the Divine Life Society, Anandakutir, Rishikesh, Himalayas, made on the 8th September 1951, the sixty-fifth birth-day of the Founder-President Swami Sivananda Saraswati in the Yoga Vedanta University weekly—Vol. III—No. 1.

SIVANANDA BOOK-OF-THE-YEAR PRIZE.

The Sivananda Book-of-the-year Prize of Rs. 500/- for the best work on Philosophy and Religion published during the year, July 1950—June 1951 (inclusive) has been awarded by the Adjudication Committee to Diwan Bahadur Sri J. Venkata Narayana Nayudu Garu, B.A., B.L., C.I.E., Madras, for his book. "The Hinduism of the Upanishads."

Swami Mounananda,
Chairman,

Sivananda Book-of-the-year Adjudication Committee.

Anandakutir,
8th September, 1951.



Sri J. V. Narayana.

THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY (Regd.)—Founder—
President—Sri Swami Sivananda Saraswati.

Sivanandashramam, Anaṇḍakutir, Rishikesh—Distt—
Dehradun, Himalayas. 11th September 1951.

To Sri Diwan Bahadur J. Venkata Narayana Nayudu Garu
MADRAS.

Glorious Immortal Self, Salutations and Adorations
Tat Twam Asi.

It is with great pleasure that I enclose a cheque for Rs. 500, the Prize for thy work "The Hinduism of the Upanishads" which has been selected by the Book-of-the-year Adjudication Committee as the best book of the year on Philosophy and Religion. I shall be grateful if you will kindly send me a stamped receipt for the amount for our record.

I consider it our humble offering at the feet of Great Maharishis, the Sages of the Upanishads, who have undoubtedly inspired your noble self from within to deal so ably with the intricacies of Upanishadic Teachings

May God bless your noble self with health, long life peace, prosperity and Kaivalya Moksha !

With kind regards, prem and Om,
Thy Own Self,
SIVANANDA.

Sir Sri S. Varadachariar, Ex-Judge, Madras High Court and Delhi Federal Court, writes on 21-9-1951 "Swami Sivananda is both a learned man and a great soul & this appreciation must be taken to be a rare blessing."

Sri P. Govindan Nair, I.C.S., Secretary to H. The Governor of Madras, writes on 15-10-1951.

" * * * His Excellency is very glad to know thy publication "The Hinduism of the Upanishads" has won the first prize from the Divine Life Society, Rishikesh.

The Hon'ble Sri P. S. Kumaraswamy Raja, Ch Minister of Madras Government, writes on 13-3-1951

" * * * I very much appreciate the efforts of

Chap. I] THE ORIGIN OF THE UPANISHADS.

number of *mantras* or texts were discovered which had found no place in any of the three original *Sanhitas*. These *mantras* were accepted as Vedas, but formed a distinct variety, a fourth *Sanhita* called *Atharva Veda* after its chief compiler. They are a mixture of poetry and prose used by the *Brahmins* or presiding priests, the followers of *Atharva*. Before proceeding further, I may state what M. Leon Delbos, a celebrated French Philosopher, has said: "There is no monument in Greece or Rome more precious than the *Rig-Veda*." Sir W. Hunter declares: "The age of *Rig Veda* was unknown." Voltaire, the French philosopher, regarded the *Yajur Veda* as the most precious gift for which the West was ever indebted to the East.

The current of Vedic thought did not stop with the compilations, but flowed on swelling and deepening until in due course and in due time it received fresh tributaries from different directions in the form of external contributions called *Brahmanas* and *Aranyakas*, whose object was the expounding of the *Sanhitas* and the teaching of such matters as the use of the *mantras* in the various sacrifices. The *Brahmanas* deal with sacrifices, liturgy and ritual. The *Aranyakas*, also called forest books, prescribe the directions for the regulation of the spiritual life of those who have retired to forest for meditation and peaceful contemplation away from the world at the end of their domestic lives and aim at teaching the mental performance of sacrifices with the help of external appliances. Monotheism as well as Polytheism is taught in the *Mantra*, *Brahmana* and *Aranyaka* portions of the Vedas.

The stream of Hindu religious speculation thus accelerated by the confluence as it were with it of *Brahmanas* :

and ultra-sacerdotal activities, at last, termi
all-embracing, all-absorbing and all-unifying
Upanishads.

The *Upanishads* originally formed parts of t
chapters of the *Brahmanas* and *Aranyakas* whi
have been from the beginning their proper
Hence they were called the *Vedanta*, the *anta*
Vedas. This is the ordinarily accepted inte
the expression '*Vedanta*'. But there is anot
annotators like Pro. Max-Muller who hold tha
a technical term, did not mean originally the
of the Veda or chapters placed, as it were, at t
volume of Vedic literature, but the end, *i.e.*
the gist or the substance of Vedic teaching. I
the original sense of the term *Vedanta* might h
find that as a matter of fact *the Upanishads are i*
of the Vedic religion, an exposition of the true scop
of the Vedas, the true kernel of the whole Vedic
conclusion drawn from the unsystematic specula
throughout the Vedas—that the world proceeds f
in One Infinite and Undivided Being and that w
Being is the highest good attainable by man.

That the *Upanishads* are the original *Vedant*
is declared by some of the *Upanishads* them
the *Svetasvatara Upanishad* says in verse 7 of
"The Supreme Brahman is sung in the *Vedanta*
verse 22 of Chapter VI:—"This very secret d
in a former age in the *Vedanta*, should not be in
whose mind is not tranquil, and to an unworthy so.
The *Mundaka Upanishad*—III. 2-6 says :-

Chap. I] THE ORIGIN OF THE UPANISHADS.

Vedanta will also be clear from Sri Sankara's comment on the *Brahma Sutras*.

In passing, it may be stated that all the four varieties of Vedic literature—*Mantra*, *Brahmana*, *Aranyaka* and *Upanishad*—are called *Srutis*, i.e., texts learnt from hearing, following the utterances of a competent teacher; scriptures other than Vedic have the common name of *Smritis*, i.e., written from what was remembered of the teachings of the ancient sages. While the *Mantras*, *Brahmanas* and *Aranyakas* with their sacrifices, rites and ceremonies and material outlook as regards rewards and punishments both here and hereafter, are called the *Karmakanda*, the *Upanishads* are considered as the *Jnanakanda* of the Vedas.

In the course of the evolution of the moral sense in man, the first dawn of religious consciousness in him must always remain one of the most inspiring and hallowing sights in the history of any nation. Through all the processes of the ages, through all the stages of his evolution, man has heard a call inspirative from without, and has felt an irresistible force from within to realise an invisible power ruling his destiny. This urge is a natural, irresistible instinct imbedded in the very constitution of man and cannot be shaken off. It comes out with the overpowering intensity of a craving, an appetite that knows no satisfaction till it realises itself in a felt contact with the invisible Power. From the first dawn of man's history so far as traceable to the invisible Power or Spirit, however differently conceived, he has spoken to him and he to the Spirit.

However savage a people may be, however primitive its customs and barbarous its worship, we always find in its background a principal Deity to whom the others are

PLACED ON THE SHEET
Date 25-7-96

Q01:24
— 350

Q01:24
— 350

SRI VENKATESWARA
CENTRAL JAIL & 2
RESENTMENT
Acc. No 27064
Date
TIRUPATI.



J. Navayana

THE HINDUISM OF THE UPANISHADS.

(The Science of Brahman or Hindu Theism.)

A Modern Scientific Exposition of the Twelve Ancient Classical Srutis.

BY

Diwan Bahadur

J. VENKATANARAYANA NAYUDU, B.A., B.L., C.I.E.,

Retired Law and Education Secretary to the Government of Madras, Ex-Collector and District Magistrate, Ex-Commissioner (Chief Executive Officer), Madras Corporation, Ex-Inspector-General of Registration, Madras, Ex-Director of Land Records, Madras.

(Author of "The Adoration of the Supreme Being," "The Essential Teachings and Sadhanas of the Bhagavadgita," "The Students' Manual of the History of England," "Survey Manual for Revenue Subordinates" published by the Government of Madras and translated by them into all the Vernacular Languages of South India).



Printed in India at the
MADRAS PUBLISHING HOUSE (1945) LTD.,
MADRAS 2.

All rights reserved.

Price Rs. 6-8-0 }
Stiff Bound }

1950

[Postage extra

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

“ THE ADORATION OF THE SUPREME BEING ”

(The soul's simple child-like converse with the All-Soul) based on the truths common to all systems of refined faith.

Price Rs. 2-0-0. Postage extra.

A. A. Hayles, Esqr., Managing Editor, The Mail, Madras
“ A work to which you have been led by Powers greater than your own. You should be proud of this work which contains so much evidence of devoted industry. The Most High will surely bless and its author.”

Sir Srinivasa Sarma, Kt., C.I.E., Editor of 'The Whip', Calcutta
“ I know Mr. Nayudu to be one of the ablest civil servants of Madras in his day, a man who was noted for his strictness in official life. The whole book has been prepared with the single purpose of God-realisation and his experiences on the subject have been brought out here. He is a strict devotee.”

Sri K. S. Krishnaswamy Iyengar Aul., Retired Judge, Madras High Court.—“ The book contains the quint essence of our moral and religion as handed down to us by the ancient saints and sages of our land. The principles and practice are found explained in your book with an insight and clarity rarely seen in similar works on the subject.”

Sir C. P. Ramaswami Ayyar Aul., K.C.S.I., Ex-Dewan Travancore.—“ I congratulate you on the originality and research displayed in the book.”

Sir C. V. Raman, Kt., F.R.S., Nobel Laureate, M.A., Hon. Ph.D., Hon. D.Sc., Hon. LL.D.—“ A great labour of love on your part.”

Sir Akbar Hydari, K.C.I.E., C.S.I., C.I.E., I.C.S., Governor Assam.—“ Not only I but my eldest girl delved into the book and found in it much food for thought. We cannot claim to be on the spiritual plane which you have attained, but I feel myself in the presence of a remarkable work.”

The Theosophist, Adyar, Madras.—“ The author, who has had a distinguished administrative career under the Madras Government has a flowing style which matches the exuberance of his emotion in treating the various aspects of his approach to the theme of Supreme Being.”

The Hon'ble Sir S. Varadachariar, Judge, Federal Court, Delhi.—
“I shall cherish the volume as a treasure.”

The Essential Teachings and Sadhanas of the Bhagavadgita

An entirely new and absolutely different approach to the sacred theme. Price Rs. 2-0-0. Postage extra.

Sir S. Varadachariar Avl., Ex-Judge, Madras High Court and Delhi Federal Court.—“As the book is the product of your heart quite as much as of your intellect, it is bound to be both inspiring and instructing.”

The Indian Express, Madras.—“Mr. Nayudu has tackled the subject in a sober and thoughtful way that wins respect. It is a systematic study written with understanding and devotion and in a lucid and cultured English. It should find a place on many bookshelves.”

Sri P. Bhadrachari Garu, M.A., Retired Director of Public Instruction, Madras, Principal, Pittapur Rajah's College, Kakinada.—“A work of admirable insight and lucidity.”

The Kalpaka, Coimbatore.—“The book presents the cream of the teachings of the Lord in the Bhagavadgita in a nutshell. It is a book that ought to be in the hands of every lover of the Bhagavadgita.”

Federated India, Madras.—“The author has shown a remarkable grasp of the teachings of the Upanishads and the Gita and his exposition thereof in this book is really very good. In some places his English rises to sublime heights of eloquence.”

The 'Sunday Times', Madras.—“A careful and devout student of Hindu Scriptures.....The author's approach is not that of a sectarian controversialist, nor even that of a bigoted believer. He approaches the Gita as a fervent, broad-minded, tolerant theist.

Sir Srinivasa Sarma, Kt., C.I.E., Editor of 'The Whip', Calcutta.—
“.....Mr. Naidu has spiritual leanings of a high order and the same is well revealed while tackling the subject. The book gives an impressive reading.”

Copies can be had of (1) Messrs. Higginbothams, Mount Road, Madras, their branches and Railway Station book stalls; (2) The Sunday Times Book Shop, 69 Peters Road, Cathedral Post, Madras; (3) Messrs. Rammohan Brothers, Subrama va Vilas. 1- Ormes R d. Kilbaur. M dras (10).

THE
HINDUISM OF THE UPANISHADS.

To Mother India and the Galaxies of Rishis,
Sages, Saints, Mahatmas, Prophets, Martyrs,
Patriots, Philanthropists, begotten by Her
from time to time to reflect the Glory,
to emit the Radiance and to
transmit the Sweetness of
The Supreme Being.

This Manual is dedicated with profound reverence.

J. VENKATANARAYANA.

THE HINDUISM OF THE UPANISHADS.

PREFACE.

Hinduism is the religion of the majority in India. It is so catholic, flexible and elastic as to embrace in its fold every form of worship, every system of thought, every symbol of philosophy and is so infinitely varied and modified by different modes of culture, by different habits of life, by different kinds of civilisation in the multifarious progressive stages of the evolution of humanity, as to be aptly called "*an encyclopaedia of religions*". It is not therefore possible to convey a full and comprehensive idea of it within the compass of a single volume. I have accordingly confined my research to that aspect of Hinduism as can be gleaned from the sayings of our ancient Rishis in the Upanishadic age. The profoundest occult truths into which human intellect has ever penetrated have been expounded, glorified and unified in the *Upanishads* and the *Bhagavadgita*, the two sacred works of Hinduism which have immensely influenced and are influencing the lives of millions of people in this country and which have been the source of my illumination and strength in every doubt and difficulty, in every trial and temptation and the uplifting consolation in the deepest and darkest sorrows which fell to my lot in this world. In other words, these ancient rhapsodies of truth have been and are to me, in the perilous journey of my humble life, like the balmy breeze which refreshes the drooping frame, like the charming voice which cheers the heavy heart, like the vernal shower which brings the vital sap to the withering plant, like the silvery stream which imparts life and strength to the weary hart and like the shining star which guides the bewildered way-farer lost in gloom. I need hardly state that the peculiar grandeur and the pre-eminent excellence of these two glorified Scriptures consists in this unquestionable fact—that they present to humanity in one panoramic view the glaring contrasts between

materialism and spirituality, between worldliness and spirituality, between falsehood and truth, between death and immortality, between transiency and immortality. Hence my aim was to express my opinion, esteem and love for them. I then felt it my imperative parental duty to rouse in my children an abiding interest in and a keen hankering for the time-honoured works. I thought that the best way of achieving this end was to utilise my experience and knowledge in preparing in a simple, easily understandable and accessible language, and placing in their hands as a preparatory measure, two concentrated manuals containing the essential teachings and sadhanas of these Upanishads. Hence this humble attempt. I may add that I am well aware that this tends to be no more than an incomplete or superficial treatment of a subject that has bewildered the imagination of many. That my utterances must partake of the imperfections of a learner, a *sadhaka*, a seeker, is a fact. I am an aspirant after the life divine.

2. For obvious reasons, I have divided the manual into two parts. Part II gives material texts with their translations. Part I contains the introductions. An introductory note has been appended at the beginning of each Upanishad to give an idea of the main contents of each. Part I deals with the historicity of the Upanishads, *i.e.*, the origin, growth and development of the Upanishadic cult, the sources of inspiration of the ancient sages, and affords the reader a general and an expository, amplificatory, inferential, and a critical review of the **fundamental** teachings of the Upanishads. I may state that as this manual is intended

mohan Roy, Professor Max-Muller, and Pandit Sitat Tattwabhusan of Calcutta, from the discourses of oriental and occidental Vedantists and Theists mentioned in this Manual. The texts adopted for exposition mostly from the translations of Rajah Rammohan Roy Tattwabhusan, except for Chandogya and Brihadaranyaka. For these two excepted pieces I have adopted the translations of Max-Muller. Immense is my debt of gratitude to all these great souls; *I bow to them with profound reverence*.

3. In this connection, I may state that the translation of Rammohan Roy's is literary, evinces a flowing, attractive style to match the exuberance of emotions and the sublimity of the thoughts conveyed in the original texts; whereas the translation of Max-Muller Tattwabhusan is dry, too literal, word by word, phrase by phrase, sometimes boringly literal at the sacrifice of elegance of expression; and this is due to a scrupulous anxiety on their part to retain "**the purity of the original and to escape the charge of having taken liberties with the time-honoured texts**"

4. I may further add that many of the anecdotes, stories and illustrations embodied in this Manual in demonstration of some of the finest of light-flashes and the sweetest of love-missives of the ancient Rishis were learnt by me at the feet of my revered Master, the late Divan Bahadur Dr. Sir R. Venkataratnam of Cocanada, the renowned educationalist of Southern India, sometime Vice-Chancellor of the Madras University, popularly and endearingly known as **Brahmarishi-Venkataratnam**, a veritable spiritual descendant, a modern prototype, of the ancient Rishis, to whom an earlier production of mine published under the title of "**The Adoration of**"

benefit of my children and myself, may be of some students of High Schools and Colleges and to others stricken like me in the stormy voyage of life, tossed about by the merciless waves of worldliness; may open their eyes to the true essence of Higher Hinduism and to the noxious cloud of many of the observances which hide the precious truth within; may lead and stimulate them to take to the path of and understanding of larger and more comprehensive religion on the Upanishads by renowned Vedantic scholars of the East and the West, exhibiting most impressively and convincingly the varied treasures of the primeval wisdom of the ancient sages of India, to breathe the pure mountain air of free thought and free enquiry, untrammelled by the long depressing, soul-stifling environments, unhindered by the accidents of birth, breeding or station and the tyrannical influence of heredity, to find a solution each single one for himself of the deeper problems of religion and philosophy that perplex every feeling heart and perplex every thinking mind, to develop an abiding consciousness of the Supreme Being, a welling love for humanity and a respect for self, to revel in the intensity of spiritual life, and above all to realise our life as the pilgrim's progress on the everlasting path unto the eternal goal.

6. May the Supreme Being, *Lord Satchidananda*, inexhaustible Fountain-Source of Truth, Wisdom and the profound Inspirer and Illuminator of the Sages of the Upanishads, vouchsafe unto us also in the abundance of His Grace and the fulness of His Mercy, a direct vision of His in-dwelling Glory, a personal communion with His Immanent Spirit, an implicit trust in His all-regulating Providence, a whole-hearted devotion to His all-controlling Purpose, a cheerful obedience to His all-governing Will, a full participation in His all-saving Goodness, a rapturous enjoyment in His all-entrancing Beauty!

19-7-1950. J. VENKATANARAYANA
 "Venkata Vilas," 2/11, Ormes Rd.,
 Kilpauk, MADRAS.

THE HINDUISM OF THE UPANISHADS.
CONTENTS.
PART I.—THE HISTORICITY AND PHILOSOPHY
OF THE UPANISHADS.

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. The Origin of the Upanishads. ...	1
II. The growth and spread of the Upanishadic cult ; the Rishis of the Upanishads. ...	13
III. The sources of inspiration of the Rishis of the Upanishads. ...	34
IV. The most distinguishing of the Transcendental Attributes of God as proclaimed by the Rishis. ...	53
V. The most distinguishing of the Immanental Attributes of God as proclaimed by the Rishis. ...	78
VI. The God-Vision of the Rishis and the Corroborative Testimony of Modern Science thereto. ...	96
VII. The Rishis' conception of the creation of the Universe and the Modern Scientific theory thereof. ...	131
VIII. The Rishis' conception of God as Absolutely Undifferentenced Brahman ; the doctrine of <i>Vishuddha Advaita Vada</i> or Unqualified Monism. ...	149
IX. The Rishis' conception of God as infinitely differentiated Brahman ; the doctrine of <i>Vishista Advaita Vada</i> or Qualified Monism. ...	167
X. The Rishis' conception of the human soul and of its final destiny. ...	180
XI. The Rishis' perception of God as <i>Sarvantaryami</i> (The Inner Self of all) and <i>Sarvavisvabharitha</i> (The Container and Upholder of the whole Universe.)...	202
XII. The Rishis' conception of the three states of the individual self—wakefulness, oblivion and sleep. ...	221
XIII. The Rishis' perception of God as specially manifested in a few chosen or elected world's worthies called <i>Mahatmas</i>	226

CHAPTER	PAGE
XIV. The Rishis' Sadhanas for realising the formless and Invisible Brahman ; the Sacrament of Spiritual worship....	23
XV. The Rishis' perception of God as ' <i>Anandam</i> ', Love itself. ...	27
XVI. The Rishis' conception of God's love to every man individually; instinctive craving of the soul for communion with God. ...	31
XVII. The Rishis' conception of the Phenomena of Death and immortality and of after-life. ...	32
XVIII. The perception of the operation of God's Moral Law in the universe by the Rishis and their apostolic successors. ...	36
XIX. The Rishis' perception of God as <i>Parama Purusha</i> or the Supreme Person ; anthropomorphic conception of God a human necessity. ...	40
XX. The Rishis' conception of <i>Bhakti</i> or reverential love to God ; its development in later epochs. ...	42
XXI. The Rishis' enjoyment of Bliss in God....	47
XXII. Conclusion. ...	47

PART II.—TEXTS OF THE TWELVE CLASSICAL UPANISHADS WITH EXPLANATORY NOTES.

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. The Chandogya Upanishad. ...	49
II. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad. ...	54
III. The Aitareya Upanishad. ...	57
IV. The Isopanishad. ...	57
V. The Kathopanishad. ...	57
VI. The Kaushitaki Upanishad. ...	58
VII. The Kenopanishad. ...	60
VIII. The Maundukyopanishad. ...	60
IX. The Mundakopanishad. ...	60
X. The Prasnopanishad. ...	61
XI. The Svetasvatara Upanishad. ...	62
XII. The Taittiriya Upanishad. ...	639 to 64

ERRATA

PAGE	LINE	FOR	READ
15	20	pur	pure
15	27	self's	self's
15	35	theists'	theist's
28	Head Line	Part	Part I
49	6	apostalic	apostolic
52	32	spirit	spirit,
74	28	ancy	fancy
85	13	simful	sinful
90	34	he	He
97	32	Grea	Great
99	3	ause	Cause
113	35	universe	universe.
153	11	Aruna	Aruni
154	6	form	from
226	33	he	the
229	29	Chaitanya	Chaitanya,
234	32	acting	exacting
243	7	practise	practice
259	17	himself	Himself
259	18	his	His
259	19	his	His
263	41	He does not only inwardly	He does not only inwardly rule the sun, but he
273	31	Thine	thine
289	17	ails	fails
311	7	he	He
311	21	Him	him

PAGE	LINE	FOR	READ
317	27	satisfied,	satisfied
324	16	he	He
332	32	taking	taking,
355	4	partake	partake
364	30	lightened	enlighten
421	9	mother	Mother
421	10	mother	Mother
421	12	mother	Mother
421	14	her	Her
421	15	her	Her
433	11	sure	sure,
459	7	forget	forgot
486	3	atlast	atlast
490	2	disciplin	disciplin
572	31	Atman	Atman,
595	37	Chitra	Indra
599	31	goes	goes.
612	9	higher	and high

THE HINDUISM OF THE UPANISHADS.

Namoh Satchidananda Harih.

Salutations to the God of Truth, Wisdom and Joy.

PART I—THE HISTORICITY AND PHILOSOPHY OF THE UPANISHADS.

CHAPTER I.

THE ORIGIN OF THE UPANISHADS.

According to *Sri Sankaracharya*, the pioneer of the Post-Gita philosophers and sages of India, the one supreme and sacred mission of whose life was the revival of the system of religion taught in the *Upanishads*, systematised in the *Brahma Sutras* and made practical in the *Bhagavadgita*, the word *Upanishad* is formed by *up* + *ni* + *sad* + *knip*, meaning that which destroys ignorance by revealing the knowledge of the Supreme Being and cutting off the bonds of *avidya* or ignorance.

The *Upanishads* are elaborate and thoughtful theological treatises on the nature and attributes of the Supreme Being, His relation to us and the world, and our relation to Him. They are believed to form an integral part of the *Vedas*, the most ancient and the most honoured and authoritative religious and theological lore of our scriptures, which forms the foundation of the whole literature of India and which has been handed down to us in an unbroken succession from the earliest times within the recollection of man by oral tradition from generation to generation before their embodiment in books which is comparatively a recent occurrence. The *Vedas* are said to contain, at least in a germinal form, all the conceptions that have found expression in the later thought of the nation. They are supposed to be the first important utterances of the human race, revealing, as they do, its earliest thoughts. They were thus, as they still are,

a body of *Shabdas*, words,—words expressing all important things and concerns of life, so that they pervade not only our literature of every phase, but also our everyday speech. The words that we utter day after day and moment after moment, are the same as are found in the Vedas. The Vedas, therefore, are, to our philosophers, identical with words,—words representing all things, earthly and heavenly. In one word, the Vedas are considered to be the grand storehouse of thought and imagination, the venerable encyclopaedia of all science, poetry, music, medicine, history and philosophy in which the Hindu mind flowered under the inspiration of the Spirit of God. Says Professor Max-Muller, that celebrated occidental scholar to whose life-long devotion and selfless labours, “*The Sacred Books of the East*” series owe their existence and who acknowledged that his real love for Sanskrit literature was first kindled by the Upanishads—“In the history of the world, the Vedas filled a gap which no literary work in any other language could fill. I maintain that to everybody who cares for himself, for his ancestors, for his history, for his intellectual development, the study of the Vedic literature is indispensable.” He maintained also that the Vedas were the oldest books in the library of mankind. Professor Heernan wrote: “The Vedas were the oldest works composed in Sanskrit and even the most ancient Sanskrit writers admitted the Vedas as already existing.”

The Vedas which were composed in all the three forms of style, prose, poetry and song, are—the *Rigveda* consisting chiefly of *riks* (poems) or metrical texts; the *Yajurveda* consisting principally of *Yajus* or ritual formulae, the compilation being mostly a sacrificial manual of prose texts, the handbook of the priest; the *Samaveda* consisting mostly of *Samans* or hymns (songs) selected from the *Rigveda*. The tripartite Vedas came to be called *Trayi*. Long after this tripartite division or rather compilation called *Sanhitas*, a

number of *mantras* or texts were discovered which had found no place in any of the three original *Sanhitas*. These *mantras* were accepted as Vedas, but formed a distinct variety, a fourth *Sanhita* called *Atharva Veda* after its chief compiler. They are a mixture of poetry and prose used by the *Brahmas* or presiding priests, the followers of *Atharva*. Before proceeding further, I may state what M. Leon Delbos, a celebrated French Philosopher, has said: "There is no monument in Greece or Rome more precious than the *Rig-Veda*." Sir W. Hunter declares: "The age of Rig Veda was unknown." Voltaire, the French philosopher, regarded the *Yajur Veda* as the most precious gift for which the West was ever indebted to the East.

The current of Vedic thought did not stop with these compilations, but flowed on swelling and deepening until in due course and in due time it received fresh tributaries from different directions in the form of external contributions called *Brahmanas* and *Aranyakas*, whose object was the expounding of the *Sanhitas* and the teaching of such matters as the use of the *mantras* in the various sacrifices. The *Brahmanas* deal with sacrifices, liturgy and ritual. The *Aranyakas*, also called forest books, prescribe the directions for the regulation of the spiritual life of those who have retired to forest for meditation and peaceful contemplation away from the world at the end of their domestic lives and aim at teaching the mental performance of sacrifices without the help of external appliances. Monotheism as well as Polytheism is taught in the *Mantra*, *Brahmana* and *Aryanyaka* portions of the Vedas.

The stream of Hindu religious speculation thus accelerated by the confluence, as it were, with it of *Brahmanas* and *Aranyakas*, rolled on, rushing and wheeling, falling and rising, narrowing and broadening, according to the peculiar features of the ages it has run through and intermittingly reaking forth into a thousand channels of sectarian, egotistic

and ultra-sacerdotal activities, at last, terminate all-embracing, all-absorbing and all-unifying ocean of the **Upanishads**.

The *Upanishads* originally formed parts of the chapters of the *Brahmanas* and *Aranyakas* which have been from the beginning their proper repository. Hence they were called the *Vedanta*, the *anta* or end of the *Vedas*. This is the ordinarily accepted interpretation of the expression '*Vedanta*'. But there is another interpretation of the term *Vedanta* given by some of the annotators like Pro. Max-Muller who hold that *Vedanta* is a technical term, did not mean originally the last part of the *Veda* or chapters placed, as it were, at the end of the volume of Vedic literature, but the end, *i.e.*, the gist or the substance of Vedic teaching. But the original sense of the term *Vedanta* might have been found that as a matter of fact *the Upanishads are the philosophy of the Vedic religion, an exposition of the true scope and meaning of the Vedas, the true kernel of the whole Veda, the conclusion drawn from the unsystematic speculations throughout the Vedas—that the world proceeds from One Infinite and Undivided Being and that union with this Being is the highest good attainable by man.*

That the *Upanishads* are the original *Vedanta* or *Vedanta* is declared by some of the *Upanishads* themselves. The *Svetasvatara Upanishad* says in verse 7 of Chapter VI:—“*The Supreme Brahman is sung in the Vedanta.*” The *Mundaka Upanishad*—III. 2-6 says:—“*Those ascetics who have properly known the object (i.e., the goal) of the science of the Vedanta and whose hearts have been purified by detachment from the world, all become immortal in the end of their earthly existence, and a*

Vedanta will also be clear from Sri Sankara's commentary on the *Brahma Sutras*.

In passing, it may be stated that all the four varieties of Vedic literature—*Mantra*, *Brahmana*, *Aranyaka* and *Upanishad*—are called *Srutis*, i.e., texts learnt from hearing, following the utterances of a competent teacher; scriptures other than Vedic have the common name of *Smritis*, i.e., books written from what was remembered of the teachings of ancient sages. While the *Mantras*, *Brahmanas* and *Aranyakas* with their sacrifices, rites and ceremonies and materialistic outlook as regards rewards and punishments both here and hereafter, are called the *Karmakanda*, the *Upanishads* are considered as the *Jnanakanda* of the Vedas.

In the course of the evolution of the moral sense in man, the first dawn of religious consciousness in him must always remain one of the most inspiring and hallowing sights in the history of any nation. Through all the processes of the ages, through all the stages of his evolution, man has heard a call inspirative from without, and has felt an urge irrepressible from within to realise an invisible power or powers ruling his destiny. This urge is a natural, irresistible instinct imbedded in the very constitution of man and cannot be shaken off. It comes out with the over-powering spontaneity of a craving, an appetite that knows no satisfaction till it realises itself in a felt contact with the invisible Spirit. From the first dawn of man's history so far as traceable, this invisible Power or Spirit, however differently conceived, has spoken to him and he to the Spirit.

However savage a people may be, however primitive its customs and barbarous its worship, we always find in the background a principal Deity to whom the others are subordinate. It is a Great Spirit, to whom the sun and the moon, the earth and the elements function as ministers. And it is a Good Spirit. It is the "Ancient of Days" like the *unkulu-kulu* (the old-old one) of the Zulus. So wide-spread is this

belief in a Superhuman Spirit within the religions of ancient races that it led Andrew Lang, the anthropologist, to declare that among them there is an unmistakable primitive tradition of a belief in a Spirit which was never born and which never dies, which knows the secret thoughts of every man's heart, which is kind and friendly to men and wishes them to be kind and friendly to each other, and which never requires worship or sacrifices or any kind of propitiations. It further led him to the conclusion that belief in this paramount, birthless and deathless Spirit came first in the order of evolution, but was afterwards thrust into the background by lesser divinities. The conception of this Spirit, however, varied from time to time, from place to place, from philosopher to philosopher. This Supreme unseen Spirit was Pythagoras' great light and salt of ages; Anaxagoras' divine mind; Socrates' good spirit; Timaeus' unbegotten principle, the author of all light; Hieron's God in man; Plato's eternal, ineffable and perfect principle of truth; Zeno's maker and father of all; and Plotin's root of the soul.

Max-Muller tells us that in the presence of this Invisible Spirit men are made sensible of their weakness and dependence; that a belief exists everywhere in some sort of divine government; that the distinction between good and evil is invariably recognised and that a hope persists of higher life, however variably speculated on.

The very first act of the world's worship was in response to this Spirit's call. That call may come from inarticulate nature, articulate prophecy, or the mysterious pulsations of one's own heart, irrespective of time or clime. The ancient cry heard in Sanskrit, Greek, Hebrew, Zend, Arabic or any other tongue, is repeated wherever *wonder* and *awe* are fresh born. It is man's answer to the bursting of glory over earth and heaven—the miracle of the ages renewed every spring. It is felt when anything else is going on.

or when a new beauty is revealed in sea or sky, man or woman. It is an instinct of the soul as natural as hope or love or admiration. It is God in the heart before He is in the temple or in the scripture. All religious teachers appeal to it. Because God is *in* us, God in song or saint appeals to us.

It was in response to this appeal that those learned Egyptian priests of old marched in procession bearing the books of Hermes and the ark of Osirus; that Moses stretched forth his rod to smite the rock and produce living water for his people and inscribed the laws on the tables of stone amidst the thunderings and lightnings of the sacred mountain Sinai; that Babylon built its highest tower for the Divinity, a tower that shall reach up unto heaven; that Zoroaster climbed every morning Mount Asnavat to catch the first gleam of the rising sun and prostrated himself in worship to that symbol of Eternal Light; that the Druid reared with gigantic stones his mystic circle in hallowed oak groves.

It was in response to this very call that many thousands of years ago when the western world was just emerging from the stone age with hardly any sense of the sublime, the hoary caves of the snowy Himalayas resounded with the transporting hymns of the Aryan sages in praise of their Vedic deities. These latter were believed to preside each over a particular group of natural phenomena. Thus a ruling god was proclaimed behind each department of nature, an awe-inspiring or benevolent god in each stupendous object, a god in the luminous sun in the sky, a god in each wondrous movement in creation. The grand movements of planetary bodies, of winds and rivers, caused the Rishis astonishment and awe. They worshipped anything and everything that excited in them wonder, veneration or gratitude. They bowed reverently before the high heavens and offered prayer and praise to thunder, lightning and rain. To the sun and fire, to the winds and rivers, they offered their hearts' warmest thanksgiving as to their best bene-

factors. The morning dawn was charming and beautiful as it was the golden hour of the day, when all nature was animated by the vivifying radiance of the returning sun and they adored it without a moment's hesitation as the beautiful goddess ' *Usha* ', the maiden of perpetual youth, and acclaimed it as the daughter of heaven. The human mind being narrow, individual impersonations of the Supreme Spirit are ordinarily called for. Hence the popular falling off into crowds of minor deities each with a name, form and function. Accordingly, the deities known as *Indra*, *Vayu*, *Varuna*, *Agni* and *Kubera* which were the personifications respectively of the five elemental forces which compose the physical world—ether, air, water, fire and earth (*Prithvi*)—were to the Aryans so many living entities and intelligences that could be addressed and propitiated by their worshippers. They, therefore, offered to those deities worship and prayer, gifts and sacrifices, rites and ceremonies of various kinds, such as they deemed would win their favour, mollify their wrath or persuade them to effect their wishes. These deities were worshipped separately by different votaries or the same votary at different times and on different occasions, as diverse objects in creation excited wonder or rivetted the heart's interest. For the time, each seemed a gigantic and mighty god before whom all others sank into insignificance and who completely absorbed the mind and monopolised the devotion of the votary. Thus each Vedic Rishi extolled his own god above all other gods as will be seen from an interesting dialogue on the First Cause between two Brahmanas and a royal sage Pravahana Jaivali recorded in Section viii of Chapter I of the Chandogya Upanishad. And thus each god became for a time the Supreme Deity and all the gods by turns acquired ascendancy as the paramount and primary creative deity under the designation of *Udgitha*, *Aditya*, *Brahma*, *Vishnu*, *Siva*, *Rudra* and such other names. Thus has been established what in the modern

philosophical language is called *Heno-theism*. But with the dawn of deeper wisdom and close introspection, the Rishis realised that their several gods were all inter-related, that they were not really different and independent deities constituting a republic of multitudinous, heterogeneous will forces scrambling and crashing against one another, but the diverse manifestations of the one and the same power, one supreme self-consistent Personality governing the universe by a single uniform system of laws.

We thus see the natural and inevitable transition of the crude, polytheistic naturalism of the Vedas into the refined, monotheistic absolutism of the Upanishads known as *Brahma Vidya*, or *Brahma Vada*, the Science of Brahman, the doctrine of an All-comprehending, Absolute, Conscious Reality, an Infinite Spirit, of which the world in its two distinct but related forms of subject and object, of mind and matter, of finite intelligences and vivifying nature, is an expression, a manifestation, a reproduction in time and space.

This marvellous transition reminds one of the old Greek story of Pygmalion to illustrate the difference between the manner in which the old way of regarding the Vedic cult comprised in the *Sanhitas*, *Brahmanas* and *Aranyakas* affected men and that in which under the new sway of the Upanishads it touches our hearts. Pygmalion, a king of Cyprus, wrought in marble the figure of a nymph. So stately and beautiful was its form, that he fell in love with it. But it had no life. Then he prayed to Aphrodite, the daughter of Zeus and the goddess of love, to grant life to the statue. His prayer was granted and the statue descended from the pedestal and became flesh with all the glowing warmth, transcendental beauty and celestial loveliness of a living damsel and a woman's heart beat within its bosom; and Pygmalion married her. So, the *Sanhitas*, *Brahmanas* and *Aranyakas* which had no life in them have indeed at the inspiration of the

Rishis been vivified and come down in the form of Upanishads from the pedestal on which they stood, to quicken and animate humanity and to be the companion, the comforter, the inspirer of our daily life.

I may also add that though the Upanishadic Rishis have dealt with the supreme theme of the God-Head from their own particular and individual stand-point, circumscribed as they were by the measure of culture which they had acquired and the time and tradition, geographical conditions and social surroundings in which they had lived, they, nevertheless, exhibit a remarkable agreement among themselves in regard to the intuition of the Unbounded, the Great First Cause, the Infinite, "the Higher than man", His relations with humanity and His activities in the world of time and space, His mysterious dealings with us, His transcendental and immanent attributes as manifested in the experiences of the immortal, free-willed human soul, the marvellous creation around us and the religious and national dispensations wrought through the lives of *Mahatmas*.

I may further add that although the Upanishads are deemed a part of the Vedas, they are, in the evolution of religious thought and of the refinement of the human mind, strictly speaking, a spontaneous revolt against, a stern, uncompromising repugnance, a stout unrelenting opposition, to the Vedic worship of innumerable gods and goddesses, practices and beliefs, interminable rites and inexhaustible ceremonies that moved through "the zodiac of feasts and fasts." In the words of Prof. Max-Müller "The object of the Upanishads is to show the utter uselessness, nay, the mischievousness of all ritual performances, to condemn every sacrificial act which has for its motive a desire or a hope of reward, to deny, if not the existence, at least the exceptional and exalted character of the devas and to teach that there is no hope of salvation and deliverance except

by the individual self recognising the True and Universal Self and finding rest there where alone rest can be found."

On the positive side, the Upanishads are a standing proclamation that all nature variously apportioned, personified and glorified as gods or goddesses in the Rigveda, from the way-side seed laden with future provision for a folded germ to the clustered systems springing in noiseless motion and perfect poise through the etherial spaces, testifies to the One, Undivided, Invisible, Supreme, Arranging Mind that has marshalled the atomic forces according to well-ordered plan and that, in other words, the sole cause, source, substance of the universe is one Supreme God, its Eternal, Unsearchable and Immutable Author, Regulator and Preserver, our Maker and Master, Mentor and Guide, Parent and Saviour, surpassing our powers of comprehension, above external sense, and whose worship in spirit and in truth, is the chief duty of mankind as the sole means of union with Him and attainment of eternal bliss and beatitude.

It is interesting also to note that in the Vedic age the Hindu mind sought God in the external universe, in the phenomena in which his power and character are imprinted, in His glory in the heavens, His handiwork on the earth, in His operations in all the forces, laws and arrangements of nature; and realised Him as taking form and unveiling Himself in mountains, rivers, impenetrable forests, in the ceaseless birth and death of countless living beings, in all the marvels of the Universe; whereas in the age of the Upanishads, it saw God '*within*'. Not observation but introspection, not the objective but the subjective, is now the watchword of Aryan theology. The child has gradually passed into adolescence. The Rishi's mind is retreating from external nature into the inner spiritual world. It is no longer the grandeur of the physical world but the mysteries of the human mind that absorbed his attention. The simple, unsophisticated, unquestioning, child-like faith of the Rig-

Vedic Rishi who saw in each arresting phenomenon a mighty benevolent god and sang in prayer and praise to him is left far behind. In other words, we find the Rishi no longer impulsive, emotional and poetical, but calm, sedate and philosophical. His spontaneous God-consciousness has developed into reflective God-consciousness, nay, into the recognition of the self in man itself as identical with the Highest Self or Brahman.

It may also be noted that the hymns of the Rig Veda bear irrefutable testimony to the fact that the only motive of the worship of the Vedic deities was for the obtaining of worldly benefits such as, wealth, prosperity, health, long-life, sons or grandsons. In the Upanishads, however, the goal of man's life underwent a thorough transformation; and the object of prayer, adoration, meditation and communion is to realise and enjoy the presence of God and to attain unity with Him in this and the next world.

As to the ultimate destiny of the finite individual after death, there is a difference of view among the Upanishadic Rishis themselves. Brahmarishis — Aruni (Chandogya), Yajnavalkya (Brihadaranyaka), Pippalada (Prasna), Angirasa (Mundaka), Maundukya (Maundukya), who teach Unqualified Monism, advocate the final merging of the finite self, its utter annihilation to the loss of individuality—in the Infinite; whereas Devarishis,—Prajapati (Chandogya), Indra (Kaushitaki), Sanatkumara (Chandogya), and Rajarishis—Pravahana Jaivali (Chandogya), Chitra (Kaushitaki) who teach Qualified Monism declare the doctrine of the everlasting existence of the finite selves in the constant presence of God and in the companionship of other liberated souls as distinct individuals in conscious unity with and yet different from God, not returning to a mundane existence like souls in bondage, and not engulfed in the state of final, though relative, *pralaya* into which Nature and minds are believed to return for a time at the end of each cycle. In later times,

the former school of thought was followed by Sankara and the latter by Ramanuja.

As regards the age of the composition of the Upanishads, chronologically, as well as in sequence of development of ideas, the *Upanishads* follow the *Brahmanas*. Their original place at the end of the *Brahmanas* correctly indicated their position in the evolution of Hindu religious thought. The researches of Prof. Max-Muller, and the investigations of Pandit Sitanath Tattwabhushan, the famous oriental product of the combined culture of the east and the west, assign the composition of the Upanishads to a time between B.C. 1000 and B.C. 800, *i.e.*, several centuries anterior to Buddha who undisputedly lived about 500 B.C. by which time all the six fundamental schools of Hindu Philosophy known as the Nyaya of Gautama, the Vaishesika of Kanada, the Sankhya of Kapila, the Yoga of Patanjali, the Purvamimamsa of Jaimini and the Uttara Mimamsa of the Rishis, the last being known as the Vedanta, were already in full swing. It may not be out of place to state here that Buddha only developed the practical side of the teaching of the Upanishads which have, therefore, come to be recognised also as the foundation indirectly of Buddhism.

CHAPTER II.

THE GROWTH AND SPREAD OF THE UPANISHADIC CULT; THE RISHIS OF THE UPANISHADS.

As stated in the previous chapter, the Upanishads formed part of the concluding chapters of Brahmanas and Aranyakas. It is, therefore, not surprising should we find some of them still dealing with the liturgical portion of the Veda, *i.e.*, the *Karmakanda*. About the third century B.C., these diffused unmethodical utterances of the Upanishads, these solitary fragments of pure gold, were, however, disinterred from the heap of the sacrificial and ceremonial literature which had

neither life nor meaning, systematised and expounded in a digest of aphorisms, called the *Brahma Sutras*, also known as the *Vedanta Sutras*, the *Saririka Mimamsa*, the *Uttara Mimamsa*. The authorship of these aphorisms is ascribed by tradition to *Badarayana* or *Krishna Dwaipayana*, the reputed compiler of the Vedas who is hence known also as *Veda Vyasa*. This digest which consists of 558 sutras and which is one of the most highly revered of all Hindu scriptures, is a complete and compendious abstract of the Upanishads, expounds and systematises their teachings and refutes doctrines opposed to them. It is also called *Nyaya-Prasthanana* or logical form of Hindu Theism. It has been composed with great discrimination and is characterised by a persevering reconciliation of all those texts which appeared to stand at variance. The *Brahma Sutras* represent in their deliberately condensed form, which, by the way, is calculated to aid the memory, the essence of long discourses on the subject matter of the *Upanishads*, the concentrated gist of a great deal of meditation and reasoning, and defend theism with evidences both scriptural and rational and refute anti-theistic theories in the same manner, with a fulness and conclusiveness which leaves no doubt of the mind uncleared.

The *Brahma Sutras* treatise is divided into four chapters according to the main subjects discussed in it,—(1) *Samanvaya* (reconciliation), (2) *Avirodha* (removal of opposition), (3) *Sadhana* (spiritual endeavour), (4) *Phala* (ultimate result). Each chapter again is divided into four *padas*. The first chapter consists mostly of verbal expositions. Many Upanishadic terms which really mean Brahman are explained by the opponents of Brahmanavada as meaning nature or the individual self. The author of the *Sutras* shows their error. In the first and second *padas* of the second chapter, the author expounds and refutes the following systems, which are all opposed to Brahmanavada,—(1) the Sankhya, (2) the Atomism of the Vaiseshikas, (3) the Sarvastivavadi Buddhist,

(4) the Vijñānavādi Buddhist, (5) the Jaina, (6) the Naiyāyika and other theisms and (7) the Bhagavata Chaturvyuhavāda. In their refutation the author of the Sūtras adduces both sastric and philosophical proofs. In the third and fourth padas of the second chapter, the author discusses some abstruse points regarding ether, the self and *prāṇa* (life). In the first pada of the third chapter, it is shown how the followers of the ritualistic portions of the Vedas proceed to the *Pitṛilokas* along the *pitṛiyāna* path and also how the followers of *jñāna* take the *devayāna* path. In the second pada, the relation of the individual and the Absolute is discussed and the unity and transcendence of the latter shown. In the third pada, there is a long discussion on the variety of *vidyās* or *upāsanas* and on the way they should be harmonised with and supplemented by one another in the actual practice of worship or meditation. Incidentally the Charvaka Materialism is refuted. In the fourth pada, the subjects discussed are the relation of *jñāna* and *karma*, *Samuchchayavāda*,—the doctrine that *jñāna* and *karma* may combine in the same *sādhaka*—and pur *Jñānavāda* or *Sanyāsa* without *karma*. In the first pada of the fourth chapter, the author discusses the *sādhanas*,—*śrāvana*, *manana* etc., *aṅggraha upāsana*, meditation of Brahman as one's own self, *pratīka upāsana*, worship or meditation with the help of a visible symbol etc., and then describes the state of *jīvanmukti*, liberation while still living. In the last three padas of this chapter, the author discusses the finite self's passing out of the body, the *devayāna* path and the nature of the liberated self. **The Brahma Sūtras mark the second stage of Vedantic speculation, the first stage being represented by the Upanishads.**

The third stage of the evolution of the Upanishadic cult marks the composition of the *Bhagavadgītā* which is even more deeply and widely honoured by our nation than the *Brahma Sūtras* and which treats specially of the theists.

duties and spiritual endeavours (*Sadhanas*). The Gita contains the quintessence of the Upanishads. Its ethical as well as metaphysical teachings are only an elaboration of the teachings of the Upanishads. In fact, its entire structure, from the foundations, the basal concrete, right up to the crowning cupola, consists of the cream of the Upanishads. The central idea of the Gita—Krishna, the Divine Being, driving the chariot of His disciple, Arjuna, and communicating to him the highest wisdom, the various forms of devotion which lead to the emancipation of the soul, expressed in language of such depth and sublimity as to be deservedly known as the *Divine Lay*, is suggested to the author of the Gita by the third Valli, first chapter, of the *Kathopanishad* which speaks of Reason as our charioteer, the body as the chariot, the understanding as the driver, the sensorium as the reins, the senses as the horses, and the objective world as the road to be travelled over, and points out the evil of following the senses and the blessedness of following Reason. The same Valli shows also that the composition of the *Kathopanishad* preceded that of the Gita and that the author of the latter was a diligent reader of the former. The whole of the Gita is interspersed with the teachings of the Upanishads whose very language has been adopted by the author of the Gita in various places as will be seen from the following parallel quotations taken from a few Upanishads and the Gita:—

Chapter and verse of the <i>Upanishad</i> .	Chapter and verse of the <i>Gita</i> .
<i>Katha</i> . VI-6. "The wise man ceases to grieve when he knows the distinction of the self from the senses which have been produced separately as also their waking and sleeping conditions."	Chap. II-11. "Thou grievest for those that should not be grieved for, and speakest words of wisdom. The wise grieve neither for the living nor for the dead."

Chapter and verse of the <i>Upanishad</i> .	Chapter and verse of the <i>Gita</i> .
<i>Katha</i> . II-19. "If the slayer thinks that he slays the self, if the slain thinks that his self is slain, both of them are ignorant, for the self neither slays nor is slain."	Chap. II-19. "He who regardeth 'This' as a slayer and he who thinketh 'It' is slain, both of them are ignorant. It slayeth not nor is it slain."
<i>Katha</i> . II-18. "The knowing self neither is born nor dies. It is not produced from anything nor is anything produced from it. It is unborn, eternal, everlasting and ancient. It is not destroyed when the body is destroyed."	Chap. II-20. "It is not born nor doth it die; nor having been ceaseth It any more to be; unborn, perpetual, eternal and ancient. It is not slain when the body is slaughtered."
<i>Svetasvatara</i> . III-16. "Everywhere are his hands and feet, everywhere are his eyes, head and face. Everywhere in the world has he his ears. He exists pervading all things."	Chap. XIII-13. "Everywhere <i>That</i> has hands and feet, everywhere eyes, heads and mouths, all-hearing. He dwelleth in the world, enveloping all."
<i>Svetasvatara</i> . III-17. "They know him to be the source of the power of all the senses but himself devoid of all senses, the Lord and Guide of all, the great Refuge of all."	Chap. XIII-14. "Shining with all sense-faculties without any senses, unattached, supporting everything; and free from properties, enjoying properties."
<i>Katha</i> . VI-I. "This eternal banian tree has its roots on high and its branches going downwards. It alone is bright, it is Brahman, it alone is called the Immortal. These worlds rest in it and none go beyond it. This is <i>that</i> ."	Chap. XV-I. "With roots above, branches below, the Asvattha is said to be indestructible; the leaves of it are hymns; he who knows it is a Veda-knower."

In fact, the *Krishna* of the Bhagavadgita is an exponent of Upanishadic theism, as will appear from the well-known and oft-quoted saying:—"The Upanishads are the cows,

the Cowherd's son, i.e., Sri Krishna, is the milker, Partha is the calf, the wiseman is the drinker, and the nectar-like Gita is the excellent milk."

Incidentally I may state here that there is a difference of opinion among theologians themselves on the question whether the *Bhagavadgita* is anterior or posterior to the *Brahma Sutras*. Relying on the expression "*Brahma Sutra Verses*" occurring in the fourth verse of the thirteenth chapter of the *Gita*, some assert that the *Brahma Sutras* were known to the author of the *Gita* and that therefore the composition of the latter must be posterior to that of the former; while some contend that the 21st aphorism of the second pada of chapter IV of the *Brahma Sutras* suggests reference indirectly to the *Gita* and therefore points to the fact that the *Gita* was known to the author of the *Brahma Sutras*. But I may point out that whereas the reference to the *Brahma Sutras* in the *Gita* is explicit and unequivocal, that relating to the *Gita* in the *Brahma Sutras* is only by a far-fetched implication and not explicitly and directly. What is more, the celebrated Vyasa, the reputed author of the *Brahma Sutras*, has been specifically mentioned and elevated by the author of the *Gita* to the status of *Vibhūtis* (special manifestations of God) in Chapter X of the scripture.

The above-mentioned three works, namely, the Upanishads taken collectively, the *Brahma Sutras* and the *Bhagavadgita*, have been from very early times considered the principal text books on Vedantic doctrines. They are also called the *Prasthanatrayam*, the three institutes of Vedantic religion and philosophy. "*Prasthanā*" means variety of exposition. The *Upanishads* are called the *Sruti Prasthanā*, scriptural institute, the *Brahma Sutras* the *Nyaya Prasthanā*, logical institute and the *Gita* the *Smṛiti-Prasthanā*, legal or practical institute. In other words, the *Upanishads* like the *Brahmanas* and the *Aranyakas*, belong, as already stated above, to what our theologians call

Sruti or revealed literature, in opposition to *Smriti* or traditional literature, which is supposed to be founded on the former and allowed to claim a secondary authority only. The *Brahma Sutras* and the *Bhagavadgita* belong to the latter class. The Upanishads,—the *Srutis* or Scriptures, command a reverence which is never extended to any other work, however meritorious it may be in itself. Though the *Brahma Sutras* is not a *Sruti*, its place is only next to the *Srutis* in the estimation in which it is held by the leaders of Hindu religious thought.

The fourth stage of the spread of Vedantism consists in the appearance on the spiritual arena of sages and philosophers, preachers and reformers of the Vedic religion like Sankara, Ramanuja, Madhva, these three being the most prominent among them, not to speak of Nimbarka, Vallabha, Baladeva and several others of Southern India, who taught the national faith through their interpretations of the *Prasthanatrayam*. I may here observe that all the great Vedantic teachers agree in upholding the fundamental teaching of true Theism that, as already stated in Chapter I, the world proceeds from and rests in One Infinite and Undivided Being and that union with this Being is the highest good attainable by man liberating him as it does from the thralldom of painful physical existence, and in opposing the *Sankhya* doctrine of an uncreated nature (*Prakriti*) and of finite souls (*Purushas*) existing independently of an Infinite Spirit and the *Nyaya* doctrine of a mere Divine Mechanic moulding the material and spiritual worlds out of pre-existing atoms and finite souls co-eternal with Him. But their differences begin when they proceed to explain in what exact way the material world and individual souls are related to God and the process of derivation of the created from the Creator. Their conflicting interpretations and variant views have brought into prominence three fundamental schools of Vedantic thought :—Unqualified Monism, Qualified

Monism, the germs of which both are, by the way, found in the teachings of the Rishis themselves, and Dualism, respectively sponsored by Sankara as *Nirvishesha* or *Vishuddha Advaita Vada*, by Ramanuja as *Vishista Advaita Vada*, and by Madhva as *Dvaita Vada*. I have briefly dealt with the first two systems in chapters VIII and IX, Part I of this Manual. I have not dealt with the Dualism of Madhva, because, though holding that matter and the individual soul are dependent on God, Madhva conceived the Infinite in such an abstract manner that he could see no unity between Him and the finite. He laid particular emphasis on the expressions of duality and difference in the *Upanishads* and the *Brahma Sutras* and explained all expressions of an opposite drift in the light of the former. Monism (*advaitavada*) is unquestionably the very corner-stone of the *Upanishads*; but Madhva condemns it in both the unqualified and the qualified shape. As I find no warrant in the *Upanishads* or the *Brahma Sutras* for such unqualified condemnation and for his unadulterated dualism even though the latter is also appealing to common sense, ennobling in character and practical in conception, I thought it to be beyond the sphere of this Manual.

The fifth stage of progress' in Vedantism consists in the translation of the *Prasthanatrayam* from Sanskrit into other languages of Asia and Europe. **The Upanishads were first translated from Sanscrit in 1657 into Persian**—at that time the most widely read language of the East—by or under the auspices of Dara Shukoh, the eldest son of Shah Jahan, the Moghul Emperor of India. Dara Shukoh's opinion was that the *Upanishads* constituted a very illuminating commentary on the Koran. About a century later, they were translated from Persian into French and in 1802 into Latin. The credit of translating some of the cardinal *Upanishads* for the first time into Indian languages, Bengali and Hindustani and also into English in

the first quarter of the nineteenth century, belongs to Raja Ram Mohan Roy.

Ram Mohan Roy, the greatest religious, social and political reformer and nation builder that India had ever produced, adopted the very same method of teaching the national religion as that pioneered by Sankara and other illustrious predecessors by writing Bengali commentaries on the *Prasthanatrayam*. Ram Mohan Roy perceived that the noble religion of the Vedanta had not only lost its hold on the nation, but even the name of the *Upanishads* was well nigh forgotten. His deeply pious and sympathetic soul was profoundly affected by the spectacle of the whole country sunk in the deepest ignorance and the most degrading superstitions. He keenly felt the need of a reform and girded up his loins for bringing it about. But his reforming ardour did not blind him, as it has done many a reformer who have come after him, to the value of the work done by the ancient religious leaders of the nation and he concluded that the edifice of future religion must be built on the religious thoughts and experiences of the past. As observed by Max-Müller, Ram Mohan Roy, like Buddha and other enlightened men before him, perceived that the time for insisting on all that previous discipline with its minute prescriptions and superstitious observances enjoined in the *Sanhitas* and *Brahmanas* was gone, while the knowledge conveyed in the *Upanishads* or the *Vedanta*, enveloped though it may be in strange coverings, should henceforth form the foundation of a new religious life. Ram Mohan Roy discovered in the *Upanishads* something different from all the rest of the Vedas, something that ought not to be thrown away, something that, if rightly understood, might supply the right soil in which alone the seeds of true religion might germinate, spring up again and prosper in India. To the keen gaze of his soul, there lay bare, amidst the puzzling heap of the national scripture, a fund of eternal truth and

27064

inexpressible joy, which, sympathetically studied, judiciously adopted, intelligently imparted and reverently received, might form the pabulum—the staple food—for his and many a coming generation of eager seekers after God. In this spirit, not of a prudent adherence to mere antiquity, but of an honest search for, and a grateful appreciation of the seeds of imperishable truth, he sought to lay down the *Vedanta* of the *Upanishads*, stripped of its strange and disgusting coverings, as the basis of the new national life. He possessed the courage, the perseverance and the self-denial of the true miner and of the true scholar and found even in the darkest and dustiest shafts real nuggets of thought and inspiration and precious jewels of faith and hope. It was because he recognised in the *Upanishads* seeds of eternal truth and was bold enough to distinguish between what was essential in them and what was not, that he translated, with expositions of his own, some of the principal *Upanishads* and also the *Vedanta Sūtras* and the *Bhagavadgita* which were concealed within the more or less inaccessible curtain of the Sanskrit language, into English, Hindustani and Bengali and also published, for the edification of all religious denominations in India, what he called “**An abridgement of the Vedanta or the resolution of all the Vedas, the most celebrated and revered work of Brahminical theology, establishing the Unity of the Supreme Being and proclaiming that He alone is the object of propitiation and worship.**”

Thus Ram Mohan Roy founded his message on the *Upanishads* for their intrinsic worth as “the one unsectarian basis and meeting place”, the suggestive source and the harmonising synthesis—of the various schools of Indian thought. Among the national scriptures, he valued the *Upanishads* for their divine authority of eternal truth; among the great “world books”, he welcomed them for their bracing, cheering national air. Thus does the soul

retain an open inlet for fresh divine inspiration as well as a healthy susceptibility to the national mode or trend of thought and sentiment; thus are individual conscience and historic continuity harmonised. As observed by Brahma Rishi Venkataratnam. "*Free yet authoritative, true yet familiar, lasting yet homely, imperishable yet national, the Upanishads were to Ram Mohan Roy the national (Swadesi) type and mould for "Universal Religion". Thus did he regain a national scripture for the rational soul and furnish to the nation that hope and confidence from the past which is the indispensable precursor to national growth and expansion. Thus was he the first and greatest reviver of the 'unfalsified', 'undamaged' Vedanta in the nation, as well as the harbinger of the light of the East to a Western horizon not yet clear of the primitive mists of a detached, heaven-enthroned God and a fallen Eden-banished man.*" But for Raja Ram Mohan Roy's labours in this direction, the *Upanishads*, the *Vedanta Sutras* and the *Bhagavadgita* would have been impenetrable sealed books to a majority of even the best educated Indians. All glory to him!

The subjects dealt with in the *Brahma Sutras* have been already indicated above. But in order to give the reader a general idea as to the trend of their treatment and to show how the author attempts to establish a particular theme by focussing on it the relevant texts gathered from several *Upanishads*, I give below a few excerpts from Raja Ram Mohan Roy's "*Abridgement of the Vedanta*". In it by '*Veda*' and '*Vedanta*' are meant the *Upanishads* and the *Brahma Sutras* respectively:—

"The illustrious Vyasa in his celebrated work, the *Vedanta*, insinuates in the first text that it is absolutely necessary for mankind to acquire knowledge respecting the Supreme Being, who is the subject of discourse in all the *Vedas* and the *Vedanta* as well as in other systems of theology. But he found from the following passages of the *Vedas* that this enquiry is limited to very narrow bounds, viz., "*The Supreme being is not comprehensible by vision, or by any other of the organs of*

inexpressible joy, which, sympathetically studied, adopted, intelligently imparted and reverently might form the pabulum—the staple food—for his a coming generation of eager seekers after God spirit, not of a prudent adherence to mere anti of an honest search for, and a grateful appreciat seeds of imperishable truth, he sought to lay *Vedanta* of the *Upanishads*, stripped of its strang gusting coverings, as the basis of the new na He possessed the courage, the perseverance and denial of the true miner and of the true scholar even in the darkest and dustiest shafts real nuggets and inspiration and precious jewels of faith and was because he recognised in the *Upanishads* seed truth and was bold enough to distinguish bet was essential in them and what was not, that he with expositions of his own, some of the principal and also the *Vedanta Sūtras* and the *Bhagavad* were concealed within the more or less inaccessi of the Sanskrit language, into English, Hindi Bengali and also published, for the edification of a denominations in India, what he called “**An ab of the Vedanta or the resolution of all the V most celebrated and revered work of Br theology, establishing the Unity of the Supre and proclaiming that He alone is the obje pitation and worship.**”

Thus Ram Mohan Roy, founded his messa *Upanishads* for their intrinsic worth as “the one basis and meeting place”, the suggestive source harmonising synthesis—of the various schools

Chap. II] UPANISHADS, THEIR GROWTH AND SPREAD

retain an open inlet for fresh divine inspiration as a healthy susceptibility to the national mode of thought and sentiment ; thus are individual consciences historic continuity harmonised. As observed by Rishi Venkataratnam. "*Free yet authoritative, true yet lasting yet homely, imperishable yet national, the Upanishads were to Ram Mohan Roy the national (Swadesi) type and for " Universal Religion ". Thus did he regain a scripture for the rational soul and furnish to the nation hope and confidence from the past which is the indispensable precursor to national growth and expansion. Thus the first and greatest reviver of the ' unfalsified ', ' undeveloped Vedanta in the nation, as well as the harbinger of the East to a Western horizon not yet clear of the mists of a detached, heaven-enthroned God and a fallen banished man.' "* But for Raja Ram Mohan Roy's in this direction, the *Upanishads*, the *Vedanta Sutra* and the *Bhagavadgita* would have been impenetrable books to a majority of even the best educated India of his glory to him !

The subjects dealt with in the *Brahma Sutras* have already indicated above. But in order to give the reader a general idea as to the trend of their treatment and show how the author attempts to establish a particular theme by focussing on it the relevant texts gathered from several *Upanishads*, I give below a few excerpts from Ram Mohan Roy's "*Abridgement of the Vedanta*". By '*Veda*' and '*Vedanta*' are meant the *Upanishads* and the *Brahma Sutras* respectively :—

" The illustrious Vyasa in his celebrated work, the *Brahma Sutra* insinuates in the first text that it is absolutely necessary for man to acquire knowledge respecting the Supreme Being, who is the

inexpressible joy, which, sympathetically studied, judiciously adopted, intelligently imparted and reverently received, might form the pabulum—the staple food—for his and for a coming generation of eager seekers after God. With the spirit, not of a prudent adherence to mere antiquity, but of an honest search for, and a grateful appreciation of, the seeds of imperishable truth, he sought to lay down the *Vedanta* of the *Upanishads*, stripped of its strange and mystifying coverings, as the basis of the new nation. He possessed the courage, the perseverance and the self-denial of the true miner and of the true scholar and he found even in the darkest and dustiest shafts real nuggets of truth and inspiration and precious jewels of faith and hope. It was because he recognised in the *Upanishads* seeds of truth and was bold enough to distinguish between what was essential in them and what was not, that he treated them with expositions of his own, some of the principal *Upanishads* and also the *Vedanta Sūtras* and the *Bhagavadgītā* were concealed within the more or less inaccessible Sanskrit language, into English, Hindustani, Bengali and also published, for the edification of all denominations in India, what he called “**An abridgement of the Vedanta or the resolution of all the Vedāntic problems, the most celebrated and revered work of Brahmin theology, establishing the Unity of the Supreme, and proclaiming that He alone is the object of devotion, meditation and worship.**”

Thus Ram Mohan Roy founded his message on the *Upanishads* for their intrinsic worth as “the one universal basis and meeting place”, the suggestive source of a harmonising synthesis—of the various schools of thought. Among the national scriptures he valued

retain an open inlet for fresh divine inspiration as well as a healthy susceptibility to the national mode or trend of thought and sentiment ; thus are individual conscience and historic continuity harmonised. As observed by Brahma Rishi Venkataratnam. "*Free yet authoritative, true yet familiar, lasting yet homely, imperishable yet national, the Upanishads were to Ram Mohan Roy the national (Swadesi) type and mould for "Universal Religion". Thus did he regain a national scripture for the rational soul and furnish to the nation that hope and confidence from the past which is the indispensable precursor to national growth and expansion. Thus was he the first and greatest reviver of the 'unfalsified', 'undamaged' Vedanta in the nation, as well as the harbinger of the light of the East to a Western horizon not yet clear of the primitive mists of a detached, heaven-enthroned God and a fallen Eden-banished man.*" But for Raja Ram Mohan Roy's labours in this direction, the *Upanishads*, the *Vedanta Sutras* and the *Bhagavadgita* would have been impenetrable sealed books to a majority of even the best educated Indians. All glory to him !

The subjects dealt with in the *Brahma Sutras* have been already indicated above. But in order to give the reader a general idea as to the trend of their treatment and to show how the author attempts to establish a particular theme by focussing on it the relevant texts gathered from several *Upanishads*, I give below a few excerpts from Raja Ram Mohan Roy's "*Abridgement of the Vedanta*". In it by '*Veda*' and '*Vedanta*' are meant the *Upanishads* and the *Brahma Sutras* respectively :—

"The illustrious Vyasa in his celebrated work, the *Vedanta*, insinuates in the first text that it is absolutely necessary for mankind to acquire knowledge respecting the Supreme Being, who is the subject

sense ; nor can He be conceived by means of devotion, *tices* " ; " He sees everything, though never seen ; hears never directly heard of. He is neither short nor is He to the reasoning faculty ; not to be compassed by the limits of the explanation of the Veda, or of human cognition also from the result of various arguments coinciding. It is found that the accurate and positive knowledge of Him is not within the boundary of comprehension, *i.e.* *how*, the Supreme Being is, cannot be definitely explained. He has therefore in the second text explained the Supreme Being. His effects and works without attempting to describe them in like manner as we, not knowing the real nature of Him, explain him to be the cause of the succession of days and nights, *by whom the birth, existence, and annihilation of the world is the " Supreme Being "*. We see the multifariousness of His effects, as well as the birth, existence and annihilation of the world, hence, we naturally infer the existence of a Being who is the cause of the whole, and call Him the Supreme, in the same manner as in the sight of a pot we conclude the existence of its artist. In like manner, declares the Supreme Being thus : *the Universal world proceeds, who is the Lord of the world, whose work is the Universe, is the Supreme Being.*"

* * * *

" The fourteenth text of the second section of the Vedanta declares : " *It is directly represented that the Supreme Being bears no figure nor form ; and the texts of the Veda assert the same, viz., " The True Being " " The Supreme Being has no feet, but extends everywhere, yet holds everything, has no eyes yet sees all that is heard everything that passes."* " *His existence had is the smallest of the small and the greatest of the great, fact, neither small nor great*".

* * * *

" The following passages of the Veda affirm the object of worship, *viz., " Adore God alone "* ; " *Know Him alone " " Give up all other discourses "*. And the Vedanta found in the Vedas ' *That none but the Supreme Being is to be worshipped, nothing excepting Him should be adored by a wise man*."

" Devotion to the Supreme Being is not limited to any place or sacred country, as the Vedanta says : " *In the mind feels itself undisturbed, men should worship Him*"

Chap. II] UPANISHADS, THEIR GROWTH AND SPREAD. 25

no specific authority for the choice of any particular place of worship is found in the Vedanta which declares: "In any place which renders the mind easy, man should adore God".

* * * * *

"The Veda illustrates the mode in which we should worship the Supreme Being, viz., "To God we should approach, of Him we should hear, of Him we should think, and to Him we should attempt to approximate". The Vedanta also elucidates the subject thus: "The three latter directions in the above quoted text, are conducive to the first, viz., "Approaching to God." These three are in reality included in the first (as the direction for collecting fire in the worship of fire), for we cannot approach to God without hearing and thinking of Him, nor without attempting to make our approximation; and the last, viz., attempting to approximate to God, is required until we have approached Him. By hearing of God is meant hearing His declarations, which establish His Unity; and by thinking of Him is meant thinking of the contents of His law; and by attempting to approximate to Him is meant attempting to apply our minds to that True Being on which the diffusive existence of the Universe relies, in order that by means of the constant practice of this attempt we may approach to Him. The Vedanta states that "Constant practice of devotion is necessary, it being represented so by the Veda" and also adds that "we should adore God till we approach to Him and even then not forsake His adoration, such authority being found in the Veda."

* * * * *

"The Vedanta shows that moral principle is a part of the adoration of God, viz., "A command over our passions and over the external senses of the body, and good acts are declared by the Veda to be indispensable in the mind's approximation to God; they should therefore be strictly taken care of and attended to, both previously and subsequently to such approximation to the Supreme Being", i.e., we should not indulge in our evil propensities, but should endeavour to have entire control over them. Reliance on and self-resignation to the only True Being, with an aversion to worldly considerations, are included in the good acts above alluded to. The adoration of the Supreme Being produces eternal beatitude, as well as all desired advantages."

As regards the number of Upanishads, Max-Müller estimates them at 170. But those that have been referred to in the *Sanhitas*, *Brahmanas* and *Aranyakas* alone are considered as genuine and the rest, most of which were treatises of inferior and alien character as spurious having

been introduced from time to time by interested authors to bolster up their particular sectarian doctrines. These so-called teachers resorted to this subterfuge on account of the authority and importance which the *Upanishads* had acquired and the universal reverence which they commanded. Thus we have not only *Saiva*, *Shakta*, *Vaishnava* and other sectarian *Upanishads* but also an *Alla Upanishad* teaching the tenets of Islam under the guise of a Vedic work, the product evidently of a over-zealous follower of the Prophet Muhammad. In this connection, it may also be stated that though appearing on the religious field several centuries after the compilation of the *Upanishads*, the world-famous *Bhagavadgita*, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, the science of Brahman, the scripture of Yoga, has been rightly exalted to the status of a "glorious *Upanishad*."

Of the genuine *Upanishads*, the well-known twelve which are dealt with in this Manual are: *Chandogya*, *Brihadaranyaka*, *Aitareya*, *Isa*, *Katha*, *Kaushitaki*, *Kena*, *Maundukya*, *Mundaka*, *Prasna*, *Svetasvatara* and *Taittiriya*. These twelve *Upanishads* are by common opinion recognised as the classical or fundamental *Upanishads* of the Vedanta philosophy, the Scriptures of Vedic theism, *Brahma Vidya*. This common opinion is based on the fact that the *Brahma Sutras*, the most ancient systematic exposition of *Brahma Vidya*, as already stated above, refers to these twelve as its authorities. All these except the *Maundukya* are referred to by Sankara in his celebrated commentary on the *Brahma Sutras* and on all these except the *Kaushitaki*, he wrote separate commentaries. He is therefore known in Vedantic works as "the *Commentator*". It should, however, be remembered that the expression '*commentator*' occurring in Vedantic works relating to *Kaushitaki* does not refer to Sankara as wrongly supposed but to one Sankarananda, an eminent Vedantic scholar, who came several centuries after Sankara.

Vedantic scholars both eastern and western are unable to lay down any precise chronological order of succession among the above-mentioned twelve Upanishads. All the principal Upanishads contain earlier and later elements side by side and therefore the age of each particular Upanishad has to be fixed by a reference to itself having regard to the stage of evolution of the sentiments contained in it. However, on the whole, the following chronological order of the emergence of the Upanishads is generally accepted :—

<i>The Ancient Prose Upanishads.</i>	<i>The Metrical Upanishads.</i>	<i>The later Prose Upanishads :</i>
(1) Chandogya.	(7) Kathopanishad.	(11) Prasna.
(2) Brihadaranyaka.	(8) Isopanishad.	(12) Maundukya.
(3) Taittiriya.	(9) Svetasvatara.	
(4) Aitareya.	(10) Mundaka.	
(5) Kaushitaki.		
(6) Kena.		

Again, the natural hunger and thirst for the acquisition of higher spiritual truths was not confined to the Brahmin sages in the seclusion of forests, but had penetrated into the courts of the Kshatria kings as well. We have undoubted internal evidence in some of the *Upanishads* of the great part played by Kshatria kings in the post-vedic spiritual renaissance, of their acquisition by perseverance, introspection and devoted study, of more important and deeper truths of the *Upanishads* which were absolutely unknown even to exalted Brahmin scholars, and their imparting them to the latter who willingly and cheerfully became their pupils, throwing aside all the paltry pride and petty prejudice of caste and kinship. This is a striking peculiarity of the Upanishadic age and stands in marked contrast with the medieval and modern times. It is also remarkable that the continuity of this spiritual ascendancy has been consistently maintained even in subsequent periods, as witness the arresting fact that *Rama*,

Krishna, Buddha, Kabir, Nanak, Tukaram, Mahatma Gandhi—the greatest religious teachers and reformers of India, ancient and modern, hailed from other-than-Brahman communities.

The more prominent Rishis mentioned in the Upanishads are :—

Deva Rishis :—Sanatkumara (Chandogya).

Indra (Kaushitaki).

Prajapati (Chandogya).

Varuna (Taittiriya).

Brahma Rishis :—Uddalaka Aruni (Chandogya and Brihadaranyaka).

Yajnavalkya (Brihadaranyaka).

Tittiri (Taittiriya).

Pippalada (Prasna).

Angirasa (Mundaka).

Mahidasa (Aitareya).

Maundukya (Maundukya).

Svetasvatara (Svetasvatara).

Sandilya (Chandogya).

Raja Rishis :— Chitra (Kaushitaki).

Ajatasatru (Kaushitaki and Brihadaranyaka).

Pravahana Jaivali (Chandogya).

Of the above Rishis, **Uddalaka Aruni, Yajnavalkya, Indra, Prajapati** and **Chitra**, are known as the **Pancha Rishis** and are acclaimed as the founders of the *Upanishadic Brahma Vidya*, the Theism of the *Upanishads*,—the first two of Unqualified Monism and the other three of Qualified Monism, which systems afterwards came to be known respectively as *Vishuddha Advaita Vada* and *Vishista Advaitavada*. as already stated above. All the five Rishis may, therefore, be said to form a hierarchy, an apostolic succession.

In expounding the results of their spiritual endeavours, the Rishis very often adopted the method of clothing them in the form of attractive and easily intelligible stories,

anecdotes and parables. This gives a value to the latter, though they may be unhistorical. Another peculiarity of the Rishis' teaching is this. They would not teach their disciples final truths at once but only by and by, leading them from stage to stage, as it is not possible to disabuse a pupil at one stretch of all his preconceived notions with which he approaches his teacher. The pupils must be first put on their trial and the incorrectness or inadequacy of the knowledge already possessed by them shown by the gradual presentation of higher ideals. Even now, we find the highest class of teachers adopting just this method.

That the Rishis held God to be unknowable by the impure-hearted, the restless, the thoughtless, the irreverent and that they led their disciples through a long process of discipline extending over many years before trying to instil into them the principles of the divine science, appears from many a fine anecdote and emphatic utterance scattered throughout the Upanishads. Thus in the *Prasnopanishad*, we find Rishi *Pippalada* withholding instruction to six enquirers after God until they went through further disciplinary exercises for another year. In the *Chanakya*, Satyakama Jabala is sent out to tend his teacher's cattle, which, not only tests his theological ardour and teaches him to be dutiful and obedient under the most trying circumstances, but further brings him into direct contact with Nature, and gives him special opportunities for cultivating habits of solitary reflection so essential to the knowledge of things divine, so that after a long and rigorous course of apprenticeship, he is enabled to know God with only a little help from his master. How much Satyakama appreciated the value of the discipline administered to him, is shown by his leading his own disciple, Upakoshala Kamalayana, through twelve years of ceremonial and spiritual exercises, though under far less painful circumstances, and letting him acquire the preliminaries of the Science of Brahman by meditating on

natural objects before giving his finishing touches to the boy's education. In the same Upanishad we read of Aruni and Virochana, representing the gods and the sages respectively, apprenticing themselves to Deva Rishi, the preceptor, for acquiring the knowledge of the Supreme. Thirty-two years of Brahmacharya did not make Virochana quite fit for the acquisition of the sacred science and he was away contented with a false idea of the Self, while Aruni had to stay with his preceptor for a whole century and finally mastered the knowledge that leads to peace and immortality. In the *Kathopanishad*, Yama, the God of Death, comes to instruct Nachiketa in the mysteries of the soul, only after offering him all the attractions of his divine kingdom, including all that men coveted and valued most, he saw that the young man was insensible to them and would not be satisfied with anything less than the knowledge he sought.

Yet another peculiarity of the Rishis' teachings is that certain Vedic deities such as *Indra*, *Prajapati*, *Yama* (the God of Death) are made to appear as philosophers, teachers of the highest wisdom to human disciples. The teachings attributed to them must necessarily be those of human thinkers. The Vedic gods are brought in apparently to lend authority to the doctrines taught.

The position of women also was infinitely better in the Upanishadic times than what still prevails in our country. The quest for spiritual knowledge was not confined to men alone. We find ladies of exalted social position such as *Gargi Vachakanavi* appearing and taking part in religious assemblies, arguing, answering, catechising side by side with the most learned men of the land, confounding them with their subtle and even dumb-founding them with their subtle penetrating enquiries. We notice ladies such as *Mandira*, wife of Rishi Yajnavalkya, renouncing worldly possessions and absorbing themselves in religious pursuits.

As regards social life in the Upanishadic times, it seems to be very different from what it is now. The four-fold system of caste was no doubt in full swing but less rigid than now. People in the higher castes do not seem to have had objection to accepting food from those of the lower. We see in *Chandogya Upanishad* Ushasti Chakrayana, a Brahmana priest, partaking of food with an elephant-driver. Men of higher castes had also no scruples to accept wives from lower classes. Raikva, a Brahmana teacher of wisdom, gladly accepts as his wife the daughter of Janasruti Pautrayana, who seems to be a Kshatriya and may even be a Sudra king, as appears not improbable from Raikva contemptuously calling him a Sudra when he offers merely material presents in return for instruction in the highest wisdom.

Again, we find in the Upanishads generally no countenance of monastic or ascetic life, although there are isolated passages here and there in its support. Active domestic and social life, a life lived in the practice of pure and unselfish principles and in the pursuit of the highest ideals of spirituality, is inculcated in the Upanishads. In the *Isopanishad*, the Rishi says: "One should wish to live a hundred years here surely by performing duties." This is the saying of those who had amply tasted the joy of the soul in the midst of family and social surroundings. The teachers of spiritual truths, with only one or two isolated exceptions were all householders and were apparently contented with being householders. And if they ever thought of giving up domestic and social life, it was only at a very advanced age and never in youth.

The generality of our Rishis believed in God's wisdom and love as manifest in the law by which provision is made for the reproduction of all living things. It is manifestly His will that creatures should reproduce their kind; and because it is their absolute duty. He has put into them all

the strength possible and impulse to fulfil it and has made obedience to the law the source of the highest gratification. That which was of the first importance and necessity, He has made the object of the strongest desire and the most enjoyable of all the uses of our animal faculties. Moreover in varying degrees, this law is all but universal in the realm of vegetable and animal life. Even the microscope reveals its presence and there is scarcely a single spot on earth to be found where the bountiful and loving Creator is not making His creatures rejoice in fulfilling His law. It is the common inheritance of man and beast, of bird and reptile, of tree and bush, of grass and corn, of bee and flower and of the tiniest insect and the smallest bacillus. *Marriage life is therefore natural and sweet if kept well under control of manly honour and maidenly modesty.* It is a lovely sight. It is one of the greatest benefactions of God, who delights in His children's pleasure and whose very law they are fulfilling when they draw to one another in those holy bonds.

Man finding his sweetness in woman, woman finding her strength in man, children finding their security in their parents, parents finding their hope in the children, brother and sister feeling as the souls twin each of the other—thus the God of Love has filled the whole universe with strength and joy—secure strength and sure joy, each the other's complement in making the full round of a world of peace and happiness. Hence the charge often hurled against our Rishis by the followers of an institution in which rigid chilling monastic celibacy is enforced as an indispensable necessity for religious life, that they (the Rishis) were more worldly than spiritual stands self-refuted.

In passing, I may add, however, that true marriage becomes more and more spiritual as married couple advance in life. In fact the whole progress of civilisation and the evolution of the moral principle in man have been summed up as the uplifting of marriage out of the mire of physical

enjoyment on to the mountain-top of spiritual monogamy—monogamy not merely of the body but also of the soul, not enforced by the world but embraced by the spirit. The true test of monogamy is the monocracy over the whole heart of the one all-endearing, even as the true mark of monotheism is the monolatry with the soul of the One All-Sufficient. The essence of both is the complete devotion of the one to the one; in both it is alone with the alone.

“O there is something in marriage, like
the veil of the temple of old,
That screened the Holy of Holies
with blue and purple and gold!
Something that makes a chamber,
where only the one may come,
A sacredness, too, and a silence,
where joy that is deepest is dumb.”

And the sacrament of marriage seeks to guard the sacredness of this ‘chamber’ with a vigilance and a devotion too wakeful for the slickest insinuation, and too firm for the hardest temptation, and to adorn and enrich it with the most endearing affection of the heart and the most sublime devotion of the soul. Married life such as lived by our Rishis was accordingly a help and not a hindrance to their spiritual attainments.

In this connection I am prompted to quote what Dr. Annie Besant, the renowned theosophist, has said:—

“The noblest ideal of married life ever given to the world is found in Hinduism, of husband and wife drawn together by spiritual affinity rather than by fleshy desire, and joined in the bonds of an indissoluble marriage, joined for spiritual development, for spiritual growth; the man unable to perform many of the religious ceremonies without the wife, the wife being the *sisya*, the pupil of the husband who was guru as well as spouse. See the life led within the family, the beautiful relationship of sons to father, of sons to mother, of brothers to sisters, and so on; all laid down with care and discrimina-

tion, always with the eye fixed on the one idea—to develop the living quality of spiritual love to man. Then the insistence on virtues, the constant holding up in the great literature fam every household, of the very noblest ideals, ideals in which me the common life of men and were yet patterns of noblest virt pressing the very loftiest purity and righteousness of life.”

To add another testimony, Rabindranath Tagor modern prototype and a close follower of the Upani Rishis, believed that woman's co-operation was essenti merely in the social and physical development of the l race but in the spiritual realisation of the individual a

CHAPTER III.

THE SOURCES OF INSPIRATION OF THE RISHI THE UPANISHADS.

The Religion of the Upanishads is not like current sy of faith an historical religion, a religion depending c authority of a single deified human or a group of e great men or on the mighty pronouncements of sacerdc or on revelation based on intallible books. It is no l construction any more than the force of gravitation, c city or vitality or the yearnings of the loving heart. a force anterior to all humanly constituted religious or tions and hierarchies, the grand spiritual stream d from above through the souls of men, of which re organisations are but the earthly banks, the clayey res and wooden dams by which men have thought they better utilise the heavenly forces.

The historical forms which religion has often as are not quite important as to its essence. In many they are full of prodigy, have large masses of untruths mixed with truths, require the application of a clo searching criticism to distinguish the one from the These historical forms all suppose that *Revelation* was

natural process, not the knowledge of God from powers inherent in the constitution of man as man—that, to put the antithesis pointedly—inspiration and its result, revelation, was the work of God and not the work of nature. On the other hand, the knowledge of God and things divine that man could acquire by using his natural powers—powers that form part of his constitution—was considered as something purely human and as having nothing divine in it or as divine only in an indirect sense as having God for its approximate cause. The wonders of these historical forms fade away with the lapse of ages, becoming more and more incredible. True religion is not of this category. It is a moral truth resting on moral proof and cannot fade or waste away. Nor is it a mere chance, an appearance or an illusion. It is there as the flowers are there which grow on the soil ; it is there as the stars are in the heavens, shining in their perennial brightness ; it is there by the ordination of that Omnipotent Being from whom all things, material and moral, emanate. It blossoms in the heart as surely as those flowers on the soil. It ripens in the character as surely as do the fruits of harvest in the fields. It belongs to nature ; it belongs to humanity.

Wherever man cherishing his purest thoughts and highest faculties finds his spirit in communion with the great Universal Spirit, there is revelation. It is not here or there exclusively. It is with the poet of a country steeped in invincible ignorance and brutal practices ; it is with sages arising in barbarous times, their light shining amidst the thick night of ignorance ; and it is with those who, enjoying higher degrees of knowledge, surrounded by an atmosphere of intelligence, find their own minds enabled thereby to look yet higher, even to the great Source of Light. Wherever moral and spiritual truth suggests itself to the mind, grows in that mind, passes from it to other minds—there is revelation ; by whatever name it may be called, under

whatever external forms of religion it may be conveyed, with whatever establishments and institutions of priests or temples it may be associated—revelation is there.

There is a state of mind to which revelation comes—not preternaturally—there is no conjuration in the case, there is no violation of law; it comes in harmony with the great laws of matter, mind and spirit. When a man has meditated in solitude or has discoursed in society—if he has become familiar with antique volumes, or has listened to living teachers—whenever and wherever he has felt most at one with the scheme of things in which he exists; when his mind retiring from petty struggles and paltry enjoyments, or seeking relief from its weight of sorrows, allowing the course of his thoughts to run freely, he has perceived, amid the great confusion of things, some moral truth, as it were, beaming from above—there has been God's revelation, the inspiration of *Brahmajñanam*.

There is something analogous to this in science. It was no logical process, by no calculation that the theory of the universe first arose in the mind of Newton; at least, according to the story, the apple fell, and the thought sprung up—how the power of gravitation might bind the planets into a homogeneous system and unite system with system, through all the regions of etherial space. And thus it is that moral and spiritual truth in the minds of men disposed to be recipients of Heaven's bounty, has come to them in all countries and in all ages—and will continue to come, while nature and man exist as they are now constituted. So it was with the Rishis of the Upanishads.

Again, the history of the human race in the spiritual realm establishes with irrefutable testimony the truth that God's inspiration is universal as the world-wide habitation of the human race and eternal as the all-absorbing hankering of the human soul for God. The Supreme God, who announced and defined Himself as '*I am*', was realised and reported

like in the hallowed oak groves of Britain, on the etherial heights of Greece, in the sanctified hills and lakes of Palestine, over the stirring plains of Arabia and in the sylvan sanctuaries of the Himalayas. This comprehensive spread of one fundamental conception of God, how was it possible unless it should be acknowledged to be the self-imparting manifestation of God to the human soul everywhere.

The human soul, the recipient of God's revelation, is a wonderful organism in creation, having been endowed with certain faculties for the acquisition of knowledge, whether of the material, visible and tangible world outside or the moral, invisible and intangible world inside us; and no knowledge is possible without an unstinted belief in the veracity and reliability of such faculties. Trust in our own faculties is the ground of faith as of knowledge. Our critical reason, the understanding, so long as we do not put too great a strain upon it and expect it to do work for us outside the limits of its proper territory and still more that experience—the true scientific foundation of all real knowledge—experience which is prior to the exercise of critical reason or understanding, the experience of the mind and the soul, are the instruments of our nature for the creation and consolidation of belief and we have no right to set our minds to think and believe in contradiction to them. That is to make against all human progress and emancipation and the great word '*faith*' is used in a wrong or degenerate sense when we are told by faith to hold beliefs which critical reason and experience make against. Superstition, that mother of multiform evil, is nothing else than the clinging to some belief in the misused name of faith in spite of experience and reason. The real faith which is a power for truth and good is not the opponent but the helper of understanding and experience.

Both the critical reason and the experience of the inward

ledge, have their times of dulness, inactivity, torpid illumination. Faith is the unswerving trust at such in the enduring verity of those things which in their of power and illumination, the critical reason and perience of the soul have taught us. Faith is t trust in our own highest and purest self which in itself in what are called our faculties, such as reason, experience, memory, intellect, love, conscience, i attention, meditation, determination, resolution, will, all of which are ineradicably welded into it. O reason, experience and love are considered to be the of spiritual life. These faculties are not separate of the soul, have no individual existence, but are, in philosophical language, only *different modes of the one undivided soul—the true ego—the true self*. T in the language of the Vedanta “*a few internal motions of the spirit*,” (the Aitareya Upanishad—Ch: the entire constitution of which has been designed and for the apprehension of God in and through His wor the essential principles of mental action when applied meditative consideration of finite things lead up fro to Infinite Creative Wisdom. The whole nature ou is a revelation of God and the whole nature within been made for the reception and interpretation revelation. Every ray that streams from every star leaf that hangs on every tree, each living structu moving creature, each brook with its babble, each riv its flow, each mountain with its serenity, each wo its freshness, each philomel with its heart-melting has therefore something to tell the human soul of the t

and the other holds that "all in the heavens and the earth praiseth God".

Accordingly every soul, every community, every race receives its light from the Supreme Being according to its capacity. The sun sends forth his radiant beams as pure white light. The full luminous stream bathes impartially the whole earth. It comes to rock, to flower, to element, absolutely the same. But with each it becomes quite different; for, each entwists the woven ray and selects from it a diverse hue according to its own inward affinities. The atmosphere picks out its blue; the leaves draw to themselves the emerald; the iris chooses the purple; the butter-cup paints itself with the yellow; the cardinal flower sucks its cells full of the scarlet. So it is with the illumination that the soul receives from the Sun of Righteousness. There is one and the same light, but what is received from it varies according to the capacity of the recipient.

I shall illustrate this truth by a short story. Three travellers belonging to three different classes described as the devotional, the martial and the commercial, were going along the same path. They happened to meet at a way-side resting place. They heard the cry of a bird on a neighbouring tree. Each asked what the bird's cry denoted. The man of devotion said it was: "*Praised be Thy Creative Power*". The man of arms said it was "*Shield, Sword and Mace*". And the man of trade, in his turn said: "*Salt, Oil, Pepper and Ginger*." Thus the same sound represented to one the glory of the God of creation, to another the defence of the body in mortal conflict and to still another the accumulation of lucre through petty trafficking. Truly, the window through which the light passes is different in different souls.

cannot rise above the state of the votary; he bears some proportion to the earth. The ascetic will be a cannibal, of the crusader the merchants a merchant." To the ascetic is but a mighty warrior; to over-burdened the unspeakable peace of Nirvana; to the down-trodden, He is the righteous avenger, the tender and loving, He discloses Himself as ever-caring Father. In the same manner as the soul in man and the generous soul's doors are opened vary, so do the conditions and the character of the revelation vary.

Says Dr. Annie Besant :—

" You cannot pour into a vessel more than it contains; the liquid only overflows on every side; and the human mind cannot flow in its entirety into these tiny vessels for its reception; only as the vessel expands to its full capacity that illimitable Self pour itself thereto."

This illumination of man by the *Sun* of Immaculate Holiness through the process of evolution is a divine process implying the descent of the Divine upon the human spirit, the transmutation of the soul with the flame of Heaven, the cleansing of the soul with the baptism of love, which subdues the passions on its stepping-stones raises man to the heights of duty and opens the gates of activity, which recognises the absolute soul upon its Author and raises it above the conditions of a sinful world into the peaceful and eternal presence of God and Father, and which blows away the barriers between man and man and knits the human race into a free and loving family of which God is the Father.

which is a purely natural process. In other words, it is a religion based on personal experiences and knowledge of ancient Rishis,—knowledge intensified by deep contemplation. The authors and composers of the *Upanishads* were perfect free-thinkers, recognising no external authority and appealing to the soul itself, purged of its impurities by long-practised disciplines and of its errors and delusions by sustained meditation, and to the introspection and understanding of the readers. We have in the *Upanishads* the results of free thought, exercised on different subjects of great moment, unfettered by the exigencies of any foregone conclusions, or of any fully-developed theory. While the Rishis deny that God is knowable in the same sense and in the same way as things finite and relative are knowable, they, at the same time, affirm his knowableness in a higher sense and by higher processes. And these processes were conceived by our Rishis to be perfectly natural, unmiraculous, universal, and at the same time divine, involving, as they do, the direct action of God on the human mind, as stated above.

The human mind is marvellously receptive and responsive. By its very constitution, it can never rest till it has recognised One universal, all-penetrating Mind or Intelligence like our will-power acting in all the movements of the world. The human thought, by its very nature, cannot take a step without encountering the demand for *cause* and as the One all-encompassing *cause*, it confronts this Mind or Intelligence at every stage. The human will, by its very disposition, cannot take up the work of life without finding its obedience claimed by the Moral law and in the Moral law it discovers the holy command of this Mind or Intelligence at every step.

feels that a Holy Unseen Presence is enfolded in the light he has discovered in that Mind or Intelligence. Hence, in introspection, the source and substance of that light is sublimity, beneficence and holiness. Hence the infinity and universality of God's action directly from his mind.

The acquisition of *Brahmajñanam*, the knowledge of God, is, according to the Rishis, not the special privilege of a certain age, the provincialism of a certain land, the favour of a favoured race. It is a universal phenomenon co-extensive with humanity. No more does fire or water quench thirst in only one part of the world. No religious truth confined to one favour of a certain Spirit has spoken to all peoples in all lands. If it is the same light in all, we need not wonder that we find the same divine accent in the sacred books of all ages. 'Eko' 'Only One without a second', so proclaims the Vedas. "The Lord our God is one", so says the Bible. "There is no God but He", so asserts the Muslims. The same light carried in such diverse vessels is offered up unto their feet for numberless pilgrims; for, from without corresponds to the light that the man from within.

It is therefore contrary to reason to suppose that God chose to reveal Himself exclusively and only to a particular individual or individuals of a particular time and place in a remote past and that that revelation was recorded in a book and that that book should be held sacred and inviolable. A little reflection would show the fallacy of this assertion. For argument's sake let

Chap. III] RISHIS' SOURCES OF INSPIRATION.

it is carried abroad over the world and down through generations, it must subject itself still more to human conditions and uncertainties. Travelling from man to man, it subjects itself to the errors attendant on verbal or written communication. Proceeding from nation to nation, it becomes liable to the distortions consequent on translation from the tongue of one into that of the other. Passing from a personal inward feeling or thought into the external symbol of speech that may communicate to others the truth felt within, it is exposed to the imperfections of language and to the errors of interpretation. There is no system of speech or written signs that can more than very inadequately represent the delicate shadings of our mental conception. While the Divine Thought which is the source of revelation is of course infallible, yet how can it find any infallible form or words in which to clothe itself? And if in the past the revelation took place and when the usages of language change from generation to generation so greatly and rapidly as they do, where shall we find an infallible interpreter to tell us their exact meaning today? Or if one be found, who shall infallibly interpret for us his explanation? We must eventually fall back on our own fallible understanding of the sense of whatever revelation or interpretation is given to us. No more can a telescope supersede the use of the eye, or the most advanced type of machinery dispense with the presence of an initiating and guiding mind than the revelation made to another man and recorded in a book can obviate the necessity of a person, thinking, interpreting it and working out the life problem for himself.

Again, when, as is the case, numerous conflicting claims are made by different religions, each posing itself to be

he deems the true revelation. And in doing so, he inevitably depends upon his own self-knowledge, his own critical reason and must take guidance from his own pre-suppositions, his own sense of right and wrong, his own experience of the good. In other words, the outward book must be subordinated to the inward book, the Inner Spirit. As observed by Brahmananda Saraswati, where God speaks through the spirit, the words of the teachers must be silent and every man must accept in reverence what God thus reveals. He must see the sacred temple of the heart and see the Lord in resplendent majesty in its midst, full of truth and love. Accordingly, the Rishi of old, in deep meditation and the grace of wisdom, the Inner Being in his own pure heart, records his own experience in words, "The pure in spirit, enlightened by the Holy God by means of worship and devotion."

Wherever truth is boldly upheld, virtue is boldly maintained, righteousness faithfully cultivated and duty faithfully accomplished—each for its own sake—there is the soul's normal state—there is the inner state of *jñanam*; for thus are *Para-Brahman* and *Atman* one and the same together. Free as air, broadcast as light, the divine showers of heaven, God's inspiration, quickens the head, quickens the heart, strengthens the will, illumines the soul of every upward looking man, in whatever time and clime he may belong. The divine presence every minute and every second of eternal time. The Holy Spirit is passing over the pregnant waiting soul evolving it into a purer, nobler and more perfect being. That with every beat of our hearts, the Lord is proclaimed to the waiting millions of the world.

This wide universe is the sacred temple of the Lord.

Chap. III] RISHIS' SOURCES OF INSPIRATION.

entitled to the bliss of communion with His Father in Heaven. Gracious God has willed that all His sons shall be blessed in His presence and in His service and that *Brahma jnanam* in diverse ways and to various degrees, shall be vouchsafed unto everyone whom His power creates, His wisdom guides and His love cherishes. He who feeds the ant in its hole, the raven in its nest, and the lion in his den, who has spread out the feast of his favours and the banquet of his bounty everywhere under the sun, whose matchless wisdom controls and whose boundless love embraces the entire round of things, has not left Himself without a manifestation in any age and in any country and does not doom the human soul to a life of want or to find stale nutriment in the crusts and crumbs from the board of antiquity, and to drink up filtered of the water that has drained into itself the dust and sediments of the ages it has run through. But with a father's care and a mother's love, He keeps His hospitable door ever open, that the hungry and the thirsty, the unclad and the homeless, may find food and drink, raiment and shelter unto their souls.

Again, *Brahma jnanam* may be likened to a gem of myriad facets through which shines the God of Truth. When after her return from a lecture by Emerson, a humble washerwoman was asked what she had understood of it, she replied that the lecturer made her feel that in her too, there lay a divine promise. God's truth is proclaimed not only through the thunder and lightnings of nature but also in the gentle accents and beaming smiles of homely love and hearty friendship. It is Emerson, again, who says: "*Jove nods to Jove from behind each one of us.*" Wherever

God spontaneously reveals Himself. It is of the nature of God, it is the true secret of Divine Love, of universal Love—to express itself through creation. To think of the sun existing and yet emitting no light is the very height of absurdity. In the physical world all objects are perceived only in the light of the sun; the sun functions both as the self-revealing luminous body and as the all-disclosing light. Likewise, in the realm of God is at once the Supreme Author of Religion and the perfect Exemplar of Religion. God is both self-effulgent and all-sanctifying Holiness. He is Grace. He imparts Grace to all. The whole round of creation is inconceivable except as the expression, the manifestation of His Spirit. He, the Self-Revealing One, is constantly flooding our souls with the illumination of His truth, His goodness and holiness with such measureless wealth of light and multiplicity, that we often forget its source. The heart, the vital centre of God's self-revelation, is not lit up alone; it is the heart of all hearts, the heart of the world; it alone can receive, who alone can be lit and led by the emanation of the Spirit. Hence comes the prayer of the Rishi—" *Avira Veermayedhi*;" " *O Thou the Self-Effulgent, Self-Radiant, Self-Manifesting, Self-Revealing One, Self-Revelation of Thine, do Thou make unto me!*"

It is not the First Cause, not the Prime Originator, not the All-Ruler, not even the All-beneficent, All-powerful One; it is the Self-Revealing God that the Rishis sought for and realised. Their prayer is that God reveal Himself to man. It is not the petition for extraneous graces. It is not the petition even for virtue and

The very same idea has been beautifully expressed by Miss Cobbe, one of the earliest to expound pure montheism in the western continent in this modern age, when she says that the first principle of Religion is not God the Father; not God the Son, but God the Holy Spirit—the Self-Revealer, the Self-Reporter, the Self-Exponent, that the spring, the fountain-head of all religion, is this—God is a self-revealing God. It shows how Religion is certainly not the invention of man, not even the discovery of man, not the result of man's quest and the achievement of man's probing insight. Religion is really the self-irradiation of God. It originates, not with man but with God. It is God's own design that man shall be religious.

The fulfilment and perfection of man's life consists in receiving God *into* Himself. Hence the aforesaid prayer of the Rishis. When compared with this prayer, the world-famous prayer of Cardinal Newman reproduced below seems after all a lower prayer:—

“Lead me, Kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom, the appalling tumult, the gaping, yawning, engulfing abyss, the receding light. Lead me on, Kindly Light; not my course, but Thy course; not my purpose, but Thy purpose; not my will, but Thy will; not as a cross to be borne but as a joy to be realised, a strength to be acquired, a success to be achieved.”

The higher prayer as offered by the Rishis is “Come into me; dwell in me. Make me a shrine of Thy Holy Spirit.”

From what has been stated in the preceding paragraphs it will be seen that by revelation and inspiration, the ancient Rishis never meant a book or a set of books whose origin is, as a rule, veiled in antiquity, within whose covers is confined

found clear indications, though under an esotericism of the latest theories in philosophy and the most recent researches in science, and from whose dictation man never at the risk of eternal welfare of his precious soul swayed by a single inch.

The great facts of religion are the Power, the Goodness of God, the reality of communion between the human soul and the Divine, the conquering of Good over evil. It is given to us to know these truths by our own reason and our own experience. To remove from the natural basis of our reason and our own experience on which God has set them and to stake them on the authority of a particular set of books written several centuries or even thousands of years ago to the exclusion of all other human literature, contain and constitute the sole authoritative revelation of God to man and to hold that what is not stated in them is a mere human speculation is incompatible with any declaration of scripture, is ruthlessly rejected, no matter what convincing reasons may be adduced in its support and how acceptable it may be to conscience and common sense, would be, in the words of Dr. Armstrong, as insane as to attempt to root up the great pyramid from the platform of rock on which it has rested for centuries and to balance it on its apex on the crest of the slim and slender palm-trees that rear their figures between the desert and the Nile.

It follows therefore that, as so emphatically stated by Swami Vivekananda: "*By the Vedas no books are meant. They mean the accumulated treasury of spiritual laws discovered by the great Aryan Rishis in different times. Just as the law of gravitation existed before its discovery and will*

Chap. III] RISHIS' SOURCES OF INSPIRATION.

remain even if we forgot them. Was there no religion of the Aryans of India before the Vedas were written up ?

Likewise we might ask about other nations also. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob no religion because Moses has yet written? Was there no Christianity in the life-time of Jesus or the first forty years of apostolic generation? Matthew put his pen on to parchment? Had there been no religion before the appearance of their Prophet?

From the foregoing it will be seen that man's own knowledge intensified by deep meditation forms the proper vehicle for the reception of the knowledge of God and the light of self-knowledge, the brightest manifestation of Divine Light, emphatically declares Truth, alone to be the eternal and imperishable scripture, wherever found, and does not recognise any book as the scripture. The scriptures of all nations are accordingly simple media of revelation and vehicles of inspiration, are of authority to us, just in the measure in which they quicken in us an answering insight and sense of the verity of that which they allege and no more. For instance, the Egyptian records chronicle the same throb of felt spiritual experiences as our own, though with different illustrations. How then, does this harmony exist among the various scriptures? The answer is that the throb and the vision that are felt in and revealed by different hearts and eyes, proceed all alike from one Heavenly Source.

Accordingly, the paramount function of Religion is to make all beings realise that there is one ever-expanding revelation. We give different names to the same river in different parts of a country, yet it is one and the same current. The truth of the Christian Apostles and the Persian Sufis is the same as that of the Hindu Rishis.

there has been accumulating the wisdom of the ages of today. Gradually but surely there has been an unveiling of the Supreme Good—the love of God. And the process is still going on and is never sealed. To this process of the Divine there is no limit except the limit of the human soul. Hence the Rishis declare that disclosure of the Divine to the human soul is never sealed, is a process of ever-expanding process varying only with the capacity and responsiveness, strength and intensity of each individual. In other words—the influx of the Divine into the human soul is a ceaseless current; the Eternal In-dweller is ever, a moving power and an illuminating presence. The doings of Divine Grace in the hearts of mankind closes not till the close of time. The Divine Himself to the pure in heart from age to age reveals a fresh truth to those who seek it, ever fresh to waiting eyes, ever watering thirsty souls of inspiration.

I may further add that the pure and eternal truths which Religion enjoys today were the original immediate perception of an infallible being—the primeval possession of a privileged race. These truths have been attained only by the efforts of generations who have successively felt after Him, who might find Him; and thus groping, straining eyes, have so refined and purged the inward vision that the ever-present Reality has become clearly perceived. The single bound has Religion sprung to the heights of today but step by step she has patiently toiled

through which Religion has had to pass, but the transition from one to the other has been by numberless gradations; and it has been because of the criticisms and discoveries of Science more than anything else, as we shall see later on in Chapter VI, that this ascent has been made. It is only as the tides of wider knowledge have worn away terrace after terrace of the alluvium of superstition, that Religion has mounted to the loftier and immovable rocks of fundamental truths. Growth in the knowledge of God is therefore a kind of progress which can have absolutely no end, for, the truth to be realised is infinite truth, truth unlimited by time or space, truth involved in all actual existence and containing the fulness of inexhaustible possibilities.

In what light the Rishis themselves viewed their discovery of spiritual truths, this is what Tattwabhusan states as the result of deep research:—

“Though forming the authoritative scriptures—the highest and most respected scriptures of a nation, the *Upanishads* are singularly free from the dogmatism which pervades other ethnical scriptures. The composers of these sacred treatises, far from arrogating to themselves any supernatural powers, do not even claim any special inspiration. They prescribe disciplines and modes of meditation which every earnest and intelligent person may go through and which, in their opinion, lead to the revelation of the Highest Self to the inward vision of the devotee. They appeal to faculties which every person possesses, and which at a certain stage of development, enable every individual soul to know the Soul of all. Scholiasts and commentators of a later age indeed appeal to the *Upanishads* as to an external authority; but the *Upanishads* themselves recognise

times ; and although sometimes cited by them in confirmation of their own opinions arrived at evidently by independent thinking, they are oftener criticised as inculcating the low discipline of sacrifices and other mere external observances than admired and appreciated. The *Upanishads*, in short, are the products of a free and enlightened age, and they retain a freshness and originality after the lapse of so many centuries after their composition. It is this fact, again, which makes them philosophical as well as religious treatises and which makes them the starting point of a philosophy which is as living now as it was in the time of Buddha.

Before closing this chapter I may assert emphatically that in understanding the religious verities declared in the *Upanishads*, we must in our turn exercise our reason and faculty and not accept them as gospel truths simply because they were proclaimed by the Rishis. Great as they were, they were not infallible. They had only used with exceptional power and ingenuity that reasoning faculty with which God had endowed the sons of men generally. We have to study their teachings with mature intelligence and undiminished ratiocination to evaluate their intrinsic merits, their balance of wisdom, their admirable method, their marvellous outlook on human nature and the world. Every truth seeker will then find in God, as the Rishis did, a living Deity and a loving Father who knocks at the door of every heart, lights the lamp of inspiration in every soul, seeks after and redeems every wandering sinner. He should honour the prophets and sages of all ages and countries. He should draw wisdom like gentle gales from distant lands, messages of wisdom and news of love from all quarters. For him the Finger of Providence is working everywhere and the whole universe is one ever-unfolding chart of God's revelation. In spirit, we should be humble in the search of truth, unbiassed in our appreciation of wisdom catholic. To him there is no book but may disclose a precious fact, no man but may disp

a particular phase of God's greatness. He is the heir of all ages, the pupil of all teachers. His admiration for the records of the experiences of the past should be reasonable yet profound, and his mission should be to distil out, drink and assimilate into himself whatever is pure and lovely and of good report in every branch of knowledge. He should aspire to the head of a Plato, the heart of a Jesus, the courage of a Luther, the faith of a Chaitanya, the fire of a Muhammad, the self-sacrifice of a Buddha. To him, the different sacred books should be but the several chapters of that endless volume which God Almighty has from time immemorial been writing on the sensitive tablets of the human heart.

CHAPTER IV.

THE MOST DISTINGUISHING OF THE TRANSCENDENTAL ATTRIBUTES OF GOD, AS PROCLAIMED IN THE UPANISHADS.

The Rishis, to whom the invisible world was a matter of direct knowledge and immediate perception, postulate the existence in and beyond the visible universe, of an invisible, intelligent, self-existent, eternal, all-pervading, in-dwelling Super-human Being, infinite in power and wisdom, perfect in holiness and goodness, whom they called the *Paramatman*, the *Self*, the *Spirit*, the *Para Brahman*, and the *Brahman*, and the profoundest truth of one fundamental Reality,—the truth of the Unity of the Spirit which provides, pervades, and perpetuates all, the one Eternal Spirit, whose power creates the earth, the sky and the stars and at the same time irradiates our mind with the light of a consciousness that moves and exists in unbroken continuity with the outer world, the one Inner Occult Energy which makes ether, gravitation and other cosmic forces possible and animates, quickens and interpenetrates them all, a Being who has

no form visible to the eye, whom nobody can see with the eye, whom we perceive not through our senses, but through our heart and the understanding and through meditation.

The most distinguishing of the Transcendental and Immanent attributes of God called respectively *Svarupa Lakshanas* and *Tatastha Lakshanas* by Vedantists, as perceived by the ancient Rishis notably of the *Taittiriya*, *Mundaka*, *Maundukya* and *Isa Upanishads* in the fulness of their knowledge and the profundity of their insight, have been admirably summed up, to serve as a constant aid to adoration, meditation and contemplation, by their modern prototype, Maharishi Debendranath Tagore of Bengal, the father of the world famous poet and philosopher Dr. Rabiindranath Tagore, in the following Sanskrit sloka :—

*Satyam Jnanamanantham Brahma Ananda rupam
amritham yadvibhathi Santham Sivam advaitham Suddham
apapaviddham.*

The True, (<i>Satyam</i>)	The All-knowing, (<i>Jnanam</i>)	The Infinite (<i>Anantham</i>)
The Blissful, (<i>Anandam</i>)	The Immortal, (<i>Amritham</i>)	The Peaceful (<i>Santham</i>)
The Good, (<i>Sivam</i>)	The One only without a second, (<i>Advaitham</i>)	
	The Holy untouched by sin. (<i>Suddham apapaviddham</i>)	

To these, may be added "*Sundaram*" (*the Beautiful*) as proclaimed by several other Rishis.

While the contemplation of transcendental attributes promotes reverential piety called *aisvarya-mulabhakti*, the contemplation of the immanent attributes helps the growth of affectionate piety called *madhurya-mulabhakti*. That the two classes of feelings balance and supplement each other and that both are indispensable to the health and fulness of spiritual life is obvious.

I shall briefly explain in this chapter what is conveyed by the Transcendental Attributes known as *Satyam*, *Jnanam*, *Anantham*, *Adwaitam*.

To start with, the Supreme Being is **Satyam**—the most True, self-contained Verity; the sole all-compassing, all-interpreting Reality; the self-subsistent Existence; the real Essence of His own Being; the very Substance, the very rock-foundation of the whole universe; the Supreme Self-acting, Self-consistent, Self-determining and Self-directing Creative Will-Force which penetrates every atom and governs every motion, every thrill and vibration from the outskirts of the heavens to the tremor of a gossamer or the pulsing of a molecule in the breast feather of a robin or the stamen of a violet,—that Living Energy by which alone all the worlds and all that is in them are sustained in their perpetual thrill and ever-lasting tremor of motion,—that Holy Spirit that pervades the whole universe, conscious at every point, with attention concentrated everywhere. The Zeus of the Greeks and the Jehova of the Jews and such like narrowly conceived deities of other faiths, all fade into insignificance before Him.

He is "*Swayam Jyothi*", the Self-Luminous, the Eternal Light that illumines the universe. He is the Light of lights. "*The sun does not shine there nor the moon, the stars or the lightnings. How shall the fire shine there? All shine after Him, the shining one. All this shines by His light*". So proclaim the Katha and Svetasvatara Upanishads. Were all lights quenched, did the sun set for ever, yet that luminous Supreme Soul will be effulgent—undimmed in His glory.

The world, material and moral, visible and invisible, tangible and intangible, external and internal, containing inanimate and animate objects and finite selves, is His creation, His emanation, a reflection of His Power, Intelligence, Love and Righteousness, His Substance unfolded into forms by His spiritual Self-action, exists in His All-comprehending Consciousness and is true only in relation to and finds the

guarantee of its reality only in Him. He is not only the Originating Cause, the ever real Creator, but also the ever-vivifying and loving Protector and Preserver, the all-harmonising and merciful Redeemer and Emancipator and the ever-lasting Perpetuator.

He is the Universal Self, the Soul of the cosmos. In all the perfection of His nature, He is present everywhere and always. In other words, He is a Being, infinite yet personal, distinct from the creature yet in every part of the creation at every moment, above all things yet under every thing ; a Being who though inhabiting eternity yet engages Himself in taking an interest and having a sympathy in matters of space and time. Even in the tiniest of His created objects, He exists in all the fulness of His wisdom and majesty. Nothing exists but comes within His watch. Nothing occurs but by His appointment or permission. All things show Him ; they are His forms, His thoughts, the features of His countenance deeply veiled. His are the substance, the operations and the results of the system of physical nature ; and His too are the powers and achievements of the intellectual essences on which He has bestowed the gift of origination and of independent action. The standing, enduring universal laws of nature, the primitive cosmical forces which sweep through all time and space, the relation of things to one another, their qualities and virtues, the order and harmony of the whole,—all that exists is from Him. The elements which compose the physical world and the ordinances which they obey are His. Whatever of subtle principles and ordered operations, the wit of man detects, is the work of His Will. The ceaseless spread of vegetation like a lovely garment over the whole earth and the ever-teeming, inexhaustible swarms of living motes are His handi-work. His are the countless tribes and families of birds and beasts with endless varieties of forms and movements and cries.

He is not merely the prime-mover that supplies energy to the whole factory of the world. He is the all-vivifying Presence. His Presence, an over-powering Personal Presence, a Mighty Reality, the Presence of a Lord and Friend, confronts us everywhere. At every turn, we meet His Holy and Divine Person. In fire and water, in all things above and below, we recognise Him as the One Omni-present and Omni-active Person. In all departments of nature, we see Him as a Person, infinite in Power, Intelligence, Love and Compassion. He is an encircling Force, an all-seeing Witness, an ever-present Father, a most Loving Mother and a Holy Saviour. The force-wall of nature's cathedral is opaque to the ordinary eye of man, but to the spiritual eye of His devotee, it is transparent. Through and in the diversified forms of gross matter, He reveals Himself to us as a Resplendent Person, a Blazing Light, an All-comprehensive intelligence and an Unending Love.

Wherever we turn, we can clearly see His splendour ; His glory even in grass ; His unspeakable beauty even in the meanest flower that blows ; His love even in every leaf of the foliage of the groves. The incense-breathing murmurs of the morning breeze reveal Him. The rippling brook and the fertile meadow proclaim Him. The vernal wood and the beautiful birds of the forest glorify Him. The sun and the moon daily announce Him with their rise and descent. The boundless sky always displays His surpassing greatness, the smiling stream His sportive delight, the surging ocean waves His resistless power, the quenchless sunbeams His resplendent glory. He is the magnifying glass through which we see the whole world of panoramic beauty. In fact, Nature of whose universal frame-work He is the warp and woof and of whose vast, quivering, pulsating body His Spirit is the life-breath, is His oldest awe-inspiring sanctuary where every object can speak and has a sacred mystery to unfold, where everything is a shadow of something higher.

He prescribes the courses and directs the movement of the earth and heavenly bodies, each sweeping through such vast distances, yet secure from all clash or collision. He is the light that shines through a myriad orbs across illimitable space. His Hand ceaselessly operates in the vegetable and the animal kingdom. He is the Vital Force immanent in every part of our body, quickening and energising all the muscular and nervous forces operating in it.

He is the Supreme One passing human imagination glorious with a resplendence which the eye cannot stand loving with a sweetness which the heart cannot conceive holy with a righteousness before which, the yearning, aspiring soul can but prostrate itself in silent awe and amazement. He is the starting point from which all demonstrations proceed, the basic datum of all our conceptions. A *Bhakta Prahalada* avows, He is the *marmam*, the secret doctrine in all branches of learning. •

In essence, He is the Supreme Consciousness which forms the basis of our life; which manifests itself as the light and support of all that we know; which, taking the form of an infinite variety of sensations and uniting them with its synthetic power, manifests itself as this wonderful variegated and diversified world of sentient and insentient objects; which disappears in sleep and oblivion, irrespective of our individual volitions; which re-appearing in awakening and memory in the same involuntary way, forms the well of conscious life; which we mistake for and take pride in as merely our individual consciousness, but which is entirely independent of our individual will but also the very root of our voluntary activity.

We are struck with wonder and dumb-founded when we contemplate what a Great being each one of us is holding in his bosom, how He is ceaselessly manifesting Himself with every one of our sensations, thoughts, feelings and actions! He, who is the support of the infinite variety

of events which science speaks of, He, who is the *Actor* of this grand and wonderful drama of the world, is manifest here, even in us, as the Maker of this small drama of our own little life.

The consciousness of the Supreme Being is all pervading and all-penetrating. The world is full of life, stir and movement. Motion indicates force. And force argues will. He is the Supreme Will-Power.

While we remain in-doors, the air blows, the ocean roars, the sun diffuses light and heat, the heavenly bodies go on revolving in their appointed orbits. All these and other cosmic changes, far and near, past, present and future, are caused by His ever-active Mind. This Cosmic Mind, this World-Soul, implied in finitude and change, and postulated under various names in the *Upanishads* and their commentaries, is significantly called the *Karya-Brahman*, the *Effect-God*, as distinguished from the *Karana Brahman*, the *Causal God* or *Ishvara*. He is also called the *Apara-Brahman*, the Lower God, as distinct from *Para-Brahman*, the Higher Brahman, the God that transcends finite existence. This Effect-God, then, the first and highest emanation from the Supreme Cause, is the totality of created existence—of which all animate and inanimate objects as well as finite souls are parts. Things that seem to us quite apart from any conscious life, events that appear to be entirely objective,—all cosmic changes in fact—are apprehended in the all-containing consciousness of Brahma. It must be remembered, however, that these distinctions of *Brahman*, *Ishvara* and *Brahma* postulated in the *Upanishads* are only so many standpoints from which the same Being is looked at. They do not imply any divisions in Him who, though variously contemplated, is one and indivisible. It is the same Being that, contemplated as absolutely self-identical, as one and without a second, is *Brahman*; as the Cause of the world

Isvara ; and as the conscious totality of all effects *Brahma* or *Hiranyagarbha*.

As stated above, He is the Supreme Will-Power. For instance, the tree that stands in front of us, we see and touch ; but we can neither see nor touch the space in which it stands. In course of time, the tree puts forth branches and leaves and bears flowers and fruits. We see all this but cannot see the thread of time which runs through all. Neither can we see the life-force by which the tree is enabled to draw sap from its roots and nourish itself—the force which operates in every vein of its leaves ; but we see only the effect in the growth of the tree. God is that Conscious Being, by whose Will, the tree has received this life-force. He, Himself, pervades the tree through and through. Him, we cannot see but can realise only in our soul.

Again we daily see the sun, but we cannot see the powers possessed by him—the power of light and heat, which illumines the world and which is the proximate source and origin as well as the preserver of all vegetable, animal and human life on the earth. Nor do we see the power of attraction which the sun exercises on our planet to keep it in its orbit and thus preserve it and its creatures from destruction. But we see only the effects of these powers. We see only that, moment by moment, hour by hour, year after year, age after age, cycle after cycle, the sun binds us to himself with his invisible and delicate touch, so that our safe course is always preserved and we cannot, wander from the salvation of his light and heat. God is that Conscious Being, by whose Will, the sun receives and exercises his powers. He himself pervades the sun through and through. Him, we cannot see but can realise only in our soul.

By *His Will-Force*, the Supreme Being calls forth all existence out of Himself, and causes the gigantic growth of vegetable and animal life in all its wondrous variety, symmetry and beauty. By *His Will-Force*, the moon sheds

her ambrosial light by night, nourishing plants and trees. By *His Will-Force*, the clouds, driven by the wind at the close of the summer season, pour down welcome showers to allay the heat. By *His Will-Force*, rivers flow from snowy mountains to irrigate and fertilise the earth, By *His Will-Force*, the trees of the forests and the gardens put forth flowers, breathing delightful fragrance and bear fruits delicious to the taste. By *His Will-Force*, wind and snow, the roaring thunder and the lightning flash become His agents to nourish the seed planted by man in the soil. By *His Will-Force*, the Mother Earth supports countless beings with her inexhaustible stores of fruitful harvests. By *His Will-Force*, a father's parental care and a mother's maternal love sustain the life of the infant. By *His Will Force*, the seasons revolve² under the spell of clock-like repetition and wonderful variety—spring with its verdure, summer with its vigour, autumn with its fruitfulness and winter with its repose.

This conception of *His Divine Will-Force*, one ceaseless, causal, active Energy, dominating and pulsating the whole universe—uniform, enduring, all-potent, conscious in every atom, every molecule, immanent in every point, yet transcendent beyond comprehension, is of unutterable majesty and grandeur and fills the mind with wonder and awe. If we try to realise what that Energy is, our imagination is instantaneously baffled, confounded and overwhelmed by its velocity as well as both by its minuteness and its immensity of operation.

The earth in its firmness, the firmament in its expanse, the stars in their myriad brightness, the flowers in their charming fragrance, the brooks and streams in their rippling murmurs, the winged birds in their melodious joy, man in his varied activities and unfailing energies, nations in their pre-destined courses—all derive their strength, their stay, their sustenance from Him, the God of *Satyam*, of Energy,

of Force. The background of the universe, the heart of the universe, is surcharged with His Spirit and with His Presence.

It is His beauty that the artist seeks. It is His law that the scientist is ever in search of. It is His wisdom that the philosopher ever longs for. It is His revelation that the prophet is ever in quest after. He is the store, the fund, the source and the spring of all life and activity.

He is the fulness of life in all things. He is the life in that clod of earth which breaks up and crumbles to pieces and throbs as the seed bursts into the seedling. He is the life in that little kid gambolling around its mother, look answering look, bleat echoing bleat, heart pulsating with heart. He is the life in that little fly, jubilant in its own activity, fleeting from flower to flower, here sucking fragrance, there sucking honey. He is the life of that little natural singer pouring forth its own inner happiness in carols, in melting strains, in those songs, the songs of the grove, varied and harmonised. He is the life of the mysterious heavens in their processions of glory from infinite to infinite,—the life of those radiant orbs measuring out centuries as if they were only hours, gleaming forth with light, as if in eternal joy, keeping order for ever and for ever, as if marshalled out into a mighty army on a holy crusade, aye, holding together in such inseparable companionship as clusters and constellations, twin pilgrims to an eternal shine. He is the life of all creatures in the sweetness and abundance of joy. He is the august, Eternal life.

I may state in this connection that there is a wonderful passage in the Chandogya Upanishad, where, in a dialogue between *Narada* and *Rishi Sanat Kumara*, the latter says that the knowledge of the four Vedas, Puranas, etc., is useless without an insight into the nature of the Spirit of God. According to him, the knowledge of these books is a mere name. Speech is greater than this name, mind

than speech, will than mind, reflection higher than sensation, knowledge than reflection, power than knowledge; and higher than all stands *Prana* or Life. This Life ought to be approached with faith and reverence and viewed as an Immensity which abides in Its own glory. That Immensity extends from above and from below, from behind and from before, from the south and from the north. It is the soul of the universe. It is God Himself. Accordingly every ray of light that dances around us, every blade of grass that waves around us, every germ of life that pulsates around us—all reflect His life and activity. Verily, we live, move, breathe and have our being in Him, the God of *Satyam*.

Do we find in God's works mere Will-Power without a design or system? There is ample proof of purpose and order in His own creation. They are conspicuous alike in the architecture of the heavens and the structure of a feather or a leaf. He, besides being the Supreme Will, is also the Ordering Wisdom. In other words, He is **Jnanam**; the all-knowing, the very essence of knowledge, the all-originating, all-foreseeing, all-foreordering, all-regulating Intelligence—that all-comprehending and immanent Intelligence that threads together the ages with a righteous purpose, that plans and designs the minutest details of the course of events in the economy of the universe and the operations of nature not forgetting even the tiniest creature therein; that all-knowing Wisdom which reveals a benevolent aim in all its ways and dealings with each individual soul; that true Wisdom which is the inspirer of sages and saints, the fountain-source of all prophecy, the true statesman's oracle, the philanthropist's inner conscience; that illuminating Wisdom by which ants and bees organise shrewd common-wealths with unerring precision and economy.

He is the husband's controlling wisdom, the wife's sustaining confidence, the child's implicit obedience, the

that evolves the destinies of nations out of the ruins of the past ever towards the glories of the future. He is the wisdom that dwells in the heart of the sage, that works in the workshop of the mechanic, that out of uncouth raw material shapes useful forms and figures. He is the wisdom that separates man from man that each may work out his own destiny, and again unites soul to soul in a universal purpose. He is the wisdom in the inspiration of the poet, in the search of the historian, in the observation of the scientist, in the forgetfulness of the patriot.

He reveals Himself to us with all His designing wisdom in this vast universe—universe, grand and beautiful with its sun, moon and stars, its hills, rivers and seas, its mountains, trees and animals—and in all the varied wonders and beauties of creation. It is His *Jñanam* that confronts us when we turn our eye, in the coincident mathematics of the atom and planet; in the untaught geometry of the bee-hive and the admirable correlation of lung and air, sound and hearing; in the mutual ministries of male and female, life and death, matter and spirit; generally in the mechanical adjustments and organic adaptations between the terrestrial and celestial economies of the universe, the progressive accommodation of external nature to the moral, intellectual and physical constitution of man. In fact, it is His *Jñanam* that has constituted the whole world as one organic and articulated system, its various parts related to one another as means and ends and all serving the purposes of life and mind. For instance, air in itself seems to be purposeless except in its relation to living organisms. The same may be said of light in its relation to the eye, of sound to the ear, of food and drink to the digestive organs.

The minutest constituents of the inorganic and organic world, of which there is not one particle but has its function to perform, our own senses and intellect bear the unmistakable stamp of His Immanent Intelligence and wonderful design.

the stamp of His deep wisdom that makes and manifests the hidden mystery and the transcendent destiny of life ; that apprehends all and enfolds within its embrace the entire history, purpose and fulfilment of creation.

He is that *Jnanam*, the illumination of the inner vision, whereby this world is transfigured into glory, past all description. As the wise one, the all-enlightening one, He is the prime source of the gospels of the ages, the revelations of the centuries, the oracle of light in the path of each pilgrim. Not a ray of light without, not a glimpse of truth within, not a throb of love anywhere, but is flowing and radiating forth from Him as the fountain-head of *Jnanam*. Beyond the reach of the stars, preceding the ages of world-formation, penetrating into the unknown depths of the soul, perceiving our inmost secret thoughts, feelings and desires, He is the God of *Jnanam*.

Truth revealed is *Jnanam*. Truth brought home to the business and the bosom of man is *Jnanam*. Truth leading the soul along the pilgrimage of life is *Jnanam*. Truth cherishing every aspiration and blessing every endeavour is *Jnanam*. Truth as it looks upon the child in hope and confidence and upon the parent in love and solicitude is *Jnanam*.

His *Jnanam*, lit as the beacon light along the voyage of life, how it voices itself in the prophets, visions itself in the saints and blesses itself in the sages !

As the Maker of the chain of events and the hidden source of the stream of events constituting the world, He is Omniscient. Though events pass away, the knowledge of events exists in Him as imperishable and eternal. All that has happened existed before its happening in His eternal knowledge and all that will happen already exists in that knowledge. The past and the future are as clear to Him as the present. He is the great "*I am*". His verbs have no tenses. His experience is never past, His knowledge never future; with Him nothing fades away and sets; nothing

dawns and brings surprise. Whatever enters into His Being is not phenomenal, but real ; not transient and finite ; but permanent and infinite. He is the essence of all the eternities. Before His eye, the accidents of life, birth and status fall away and the inner significance alone is present to His view.

In His original and ultimate, unmanifested and transcendental existence, He is One, indivisible, infinite, spaceless, timeless, eternal, unchangeable, undifferented, all comprehending, and all-knowing Self. For Him, there is no change, no appearance or disappearance of objects, no passing from ignorance to knowledge. For Him, knowledge is not an act but an eternal fact or possession. He is not the subject or agent of knowledge to whom perception is an act beginning or ending. He is not a *Jnani* or knower but *Jnanam*—absolute knowledge—an eternal subject-object.

The Supreme Being is **Anantham**, filling all space and time and yet transcending both. The world calls Him "The Infinite", but we feel that it is a word all too poor to represent His amplitude, His altitude, His illimitable, inconceivably surpassing greatness and grandeur. Though He is co-extensive with the universe, the universe is not conterminous and identical with Him. The universe with its countless galaxies of heavenly bodies floating in space is but a drop in the boundless ocean of His infinitude. He is vaster than the vastest object and subtler than the subtlest.

In the words of the Chandogya Upanishad, "He is the smallest of the small and the greatest of the great and yet, in fact, neither small nor great." He is mightier than the mightiest, loftier than the loftiest heights, profounder than the profoundest depths that imagination has ever visualised in its flight up or descent down. Caves where light has never penetrated, depths where sound has never reached, distances which imagination has never overtaken—all,

all are embraced within Him. In the language of the Mundaka Upanishad, He is "that which is shining, smaller than an atom in which rest the worlds and their inhabitants."

He is like everything, unlike anything, filling all things, seen in all things, beyond all things. Even behind the veil of creation, He possesses an infinite reserve of power, thought, beauty and holy love. He might, therefore, fling aside this universe at any time and take another as one changes his vesture. The Rishis have aptly described His vastness as a circle whose centre is everywhere and whose circumference nowhere. He, the Infinite God, finds a place on the point of an atom, though the heaven of heavens cannot contain Him. As observed by Emerson, the celebrated American sage, a modern prototype of our ancient Rishis, who has an unbounded admiration for the Upanishads, He is as perfect in an atom as in a Universe.

In His primitive and absolute existence, He is intangible, undefinable, inconceivable, indescribable, inexhaustible and unfathomable. Our poor limited intellect cannot comprehend His unmanifested transcendental existence. As the Truth that constitutes and endures as imperishable Reality, as the Wisdom that conveys light and manifests unerring Providence, He is illimitable, unsurpassable, out-soaring the flights of imagination and out-reaching the depths of insight. He embraces in His infinitude every passing incident which enters into the life-history of the world.

Like little sportive children supporting themselves on their heads and shooting up their legs to the farthest tips of their toes and fancying the while that they can touch the stars, we at times fondly imagine that standing on our intellectual heads and reaching out to the farthest ray of human intelligence, we can touch and describe Him. But even as the child, as he opens his eyes, feels giddy, recovers balance, gazes towards the firmament, realises his littleness

and jumps up in joy that he is under a topless sky, so do we give up the quest of the intellect and restored to the balance of faith, spring forth in the joy of adoration that we are under an indescribable God. Though we cannot grasp Him with our intellect in His upward ascent, we look below and see Him everywhere in the vast world around us.

He is in that ceaseless flow of life and love, that crystal brook springing in the heart of mother earth, like a child leaping from descent to descent, never resting, never halting, ever smiling, ever babbling. He is in the serene solitudes of mountain and forest ever redolent with music, ever fragrant with aroma, with no human foot ever reaching them, no human eye ever bent on them, yet so lavish with the wealth of beauty and joy. He is in that vast main, ever smiling and laughing, ever leaping and singing, so jubilant at the crest, yet so calm in the interior depths within depths.

He is both *Saguna* and *Nirguna*, Immanent and Transcendent, Personal and Impersonal, as embodied in the various objects of the world, and as beyond these objects. The primary qualities of the objective world, the fundamental elements of which all objects are so many mixtures, are, according to our philosophers, *sattvam*, the principle of manifested intelligence, *rajas*, the principle of attraction, and *tamas*, the principle of darkness (*i.e.*, materiality, inertia). These are the three *gunas*, qualities, into which our philosophy resolves everything objective. Now, God being the only Reality in the universe, the All-in-all, the *gunas* must be contemplated as nothing but forms in which He manifests Himself. As manifesting Himself in these forms, God is *saguna*, with the *gunas*, *i.e.*, qualified, differentiated, embodied in a sense, immanent in Nature. But the Reality that manifests itself in these various forms, shows, by this very fact of manifestation, that it has an inner, independent nature apart from its modifications. The modifications come and go, but the Reality persists and brings out fresh pheno-

mena from the inexhaustible source of its inner nature. Again, the phenomena of Nature are objects, and, as such, related to a permanent subject. Or, if we contemplate subject and object as mutually related, inter-dependent, they imply an Absolute Intelligence in which they are unified and their distinction resolved. This Absolute Intelligence, by its very function of uniting related objects distinguished from one another, must transcend all relations and distinctions, all *gunas*, all that belongs to phenomenal objects. By its every nature, it must be undefinable, indescribable, unspeakable, except in terms of objects and relations which it transcends. Hence our philosophers call it *nirguna*, without the *gunas*, and *nirvishesha*, undifferentenced or unqualified—transcending all natural objects, gross and fine, and their various relations.

The terms *guna*, *saguna* and *nirguna* are not met with in eleven of the twelve classical Upanishads, though all contain texts in which the Supreme Being is spoken of in both the forms indicated. The terms are explicitly met with only in the Svetasvatara Upanishad. Here are some texts in which, as if to show the truth and connection of both these aspects of the Divine nature, It is spoken of as both *saguna* and *nirguna* :—

“ It moves and It moves not. It is far and It is near. It is in all this and It is out of all this. (Isophanishad—5)

“ As the one fire, entering the world, takes the form of each object it burns, so the One Inner Self of all creatures takes the form of each object, and is also beyond all objects. As the one air, entering the world, takes the form of each object, so the One Inner Self of all creatures takes the form of each object and is also beyond all objects.” (Katha Upanishad V. 9. 10)

“ That one God is hidden in all things; He is omnipresent and the Inner Self of all; He superintends all work and lives in all beings; He is the Witness, the Inspirer, detached and above the *gunas*. (Svetasvatara, VI, 11.)

These two aspects of Divine nature are not mutually contradictory. As we grow in the conception of His Being

as the God of Immanence, whose spirit is inwoven through the whole complex of creation, so as to comprise the far-off nebulae and the near flower, He, the God of Transcendence, to whom the star is the other self of the flower, their respective light and aroma being but modulations of His Beauty, now radiant, now again fragrant, even He, the God of Transcendence, comes closer and closer to us in life and experience. For, while He baffles the imagination that would grasp Him, He reveals Himself readily to the heart that loves Him. He, as the God of the *bhakta*, is in the heart ; but it is not that He is not outside the heart as well. The light of the sun is in the dew-drop ; but it is outside also. The breath of the mother is in the lullaby. But it is not exhausted in the lullaby. The sweet smile of the friend is in the greeting of his love ; but it does not end with it. Thus, He, the Infinite God, the God of Transcendence, is also the God of Immanence, manifesting Himself in and through creation, yet ever remaining inexhaustible. He, as the God of Transcendence, is for our contemplation and communion ; and He, as the God of Immanence, is for our love and devotion. In other words, God's Transcendence and Immanence are complements to each other. He, as the God of Transcendence—God in His essence, is *Eternal Bliss*. He, as the God of Immanence—God in His expression, is *Eternal Benevolence*. Man, His child, is the partner of both *Bliss* and *Benevolence*. He, as the God of Transcendence, is the Eternal, "*I am*." He, as the God of Immanence, is the Eternal "*I am thine*." He, as the God of Transcendence, is self-abiding ; He, as the God of Immanence, is *self-donating*. His Transcendence merges into Immanence and becomes *Revelation*. His Immanence resumes into Transcendence and becomes *Realisation*. The devotee reaches Him in Immanence ; He resumes him in Transcendence. Thus Transcendence and Immanence are two aspects of one and the same Deity.

This is how Sri Rama Krishna Paramahansa, one of the greatest of our modern saints, popularly known as the Saint of Dakshineswar, says of his experience of God as Transcendent and Immanent, as Impersonal and Personal.

"When I think of the Supreme Being as inactive, neither creating, nor preserving, nor destroying, I call Him Brahman or Purusha, the Impersonal God. When I think of Him as active, creating, preserving, destroying, I call Him *Shakti* or *Maya* or *Prakriti*, the Personal God. But the distinction between them does not mean a difference. The Personal and the Impersonal are the same Being, in the same way as milk and its whiteness, or the diamond and its lustre, or the serpent and its undulations. It is impossible to conceive of the one without the other. The Divine Mother and Brahman are one."

Likewise Sri Aurobindo, the Sage of Pondicherry, explained *Nirguna and Saguna* as follows to his disciples:—

"In a realistic Adwaita there is no need to regard the *Saguna* as a creation from the *Nirguna* or even secondary or subordinate to it: both are equal aspects of the one Reality, Its position of silent status and rest and Its position of action and dynamic force; a silence of eternal rest and peace supports an eternal action and movement. The one Reality, the Divine Being, is bound by neither, since It is in no way limited; It possesses both. There is no incompatibility between the two, as there is none between the Many and the One, the sameness and the difference. They are all eternal aspects of the universe which could not exist if either of them were eliminated, and it is reasonable to suppose that they both came from the Reality which has manifested the universe and are both real."

As the Infinite, God fills all space but is not confined to any particular portion of it. It is by His unifying power the various, distinct and divisible parts of and objects in space are united and held together. Space with its notions of '*this*' and '*that*', '*here*' and '*there*' is inconceivable without relation to Him who is the One Indivisible, Uniting Consciousness. He is therefore spaceless, transcending space. In our perception of space, in our perception of one object as external to another, we realise Him as non-external, as transcending space, as including in His consciousness both the

related objects. In other words, we realise Him as the unifying and concretising principle holding together the diversity and discreteness implied in space. He is the *Akshara*, the Imperishable or the Absolute, in whom space is woven like warp and woof.

Our knowledge of space, be it mediate or immediate, involves in it the idea of unity and infinity. We know each portion of space as included in one infinite space and in this knowledge of one infinite space is implied the knowledge of the unity and the infinity of the self. We could not know one infinite space, if we were not essentially one with the One, Indivisible, Infinite, Supreme Self.

O! who could measure the extent of His space! We could visualise the universe as one ocean of space in which there are islands of matter. If we look at the stars, we would find galaxies of them which were known as spiral nebulae. The distance of the nearest galaxy from the earth is said to be eighteen trillion miles. These galaxies consist of great systems of thousands of millions of stars. In the galaxy of which the earth forms a part, our sun, separated from us by ninety-three millions of miles, is one such star, not even a speck of dust in the vastness of His space. Scientists have rent the veil of the firmament and so far discovered with the highest powered telescope ten million galaxies and calculated that all the galaxies would total about one hundred thousand millions, if they had a telescope sufficiently powerful. The most distant spiral nebulae separated from our earth by two hundred and fifty millions of *light* years and which is travelling away from the earth into space still yonder at a speed of twenty-five thousand miles per second, cannot reach the limit of His space. I may here state that for measuring the distance of the stars from the earth and for other measurements of the universe, a light year is taken as the unit. This is the distance travelled by light in a

year and is calculated at six million million miles 6,000,000,000,000.

The astronomers make us dizzy with their baffling, perplexing calculations. The mind, with all its eager self-application to knowledge, simply sinks back in astounded surprise, as they that endeavour to take the measure of His space tell us of its immensity. Yet, through all this vastness, He, the Infinite *Paramatman*, indwells with all the minuteness, intimacy and immanence of the spirit, entering into every mote and particle in the shoreless and depthless ocean of creation. Infinite is the measure of His Being, the height of His greatness, the reach of His vastness, the profundity of His depth. He is the matchless, measureless, limitless Brahman transcending all space.

Even as He is Infinite, God is Eternal and transcends all time. He is free from time. He is the maker of time, of the chain of events that constitute time. Time with its notions of 'now' and 'then', 'before' and 'after' cannot be conceived except in relation to Him who is timeless. All events or series of events in the world are bound together in a necessary link, the one following the other in an irreversible order. He, the Eternal, Unchangeable Spirit, is not only the originating cause but also the basis and the forger of this union, the witness of all the events included in this unbroken chain of phenomena. The whole history of the universe is the history of an endless chain of events, occurrences or happenings. The necessary correlate to this world order is God Himself, who not being an event or a series of events, makes all events possible, and who not being identified with our perishing thoughts and feelings, is at the same time, the basis of our conscious life, "*the eternal among non-eternal, the consciousness of conscious beings*" in the words of the Rishis of Katha and Svetasvatara Upanishads.

Being the cause and condition of events which we call birth, life and death of conscious beings, He is above birth, death and change.

Though events pass away, the self, which not being an event makes events and series of events possible and which connects one with the other, does not pass away, does not flow in the current of time, but shows itself to be above time. Our perception of time or successive events involves, therefore, the realisation of our *Inmost Self* as beyond time, eternal, unborn and undying as the Kathopanishad avers. In other words, every perception of time is a consciousness of the knowing self as timeless. Just as we could not know space if we were merely limited objects, and had not God as our *Antiharatma*, so we could not know time, if we were mere creatures of time and had not Him, the Eternal, the unborn, the undying and the Omniscient as the very basis of our conscious life.

In the crust of the earth, in the travels of the sun-beam, in the far-reaching flash of the remotest star, in the growth of human civilisation, in the up-building of human wisdom, in the unfolding of the human soul, the history of God has been traced back, His purposes have been read out through millions of æons. Yet, He is not only pre-fixed in illimitable time but also stretched forth beyond the shoreless ocean of space. Yet how near is He unto us, living in our very selves as our Higher Self! If He had stood aloof in His own infinite distance, in the recesses beyond the reach of fancy flight, how dreary, how solitary, what a desert, what a desolation should this world have been? Vastness and yet nearness, immensity and yet immediacy, far as the mind may travel, yet near as the heart can wish, He is so dear to every spirit.

The Supreme Being is **Adwaitam**, the One only without a second; the Eternal One to whom every part and particle is equally related; the absolutely unrivalled, un-

paralleled, undivided One ; the all-indwelling, the all-vivifying, the all-perfecting One. In the words of Emerson, " He is that Unity, that Over-Soul within which every man's particular being is contained and made one with all others ; that over-powering Reality which confutes our tricks and talents and constrains every one to pass for what he is and to speak from his character and not from his tongue and which evermore tends to pass into our thought and hand and become wisdom and virtue, power and beauty."

He is the One only Reality, which though containing innumerable internal differences, is without external difference, without relation to or in fact without having anything external to it. Outside Him there is nothing that is manifest ; outside Him there is no life, no thought, no mind. He is unbounded and unsurpassed in His all-embracing unity—the unity of Self-Consciousness in which all differences and diversities are unified—unified not in the sense of their being merged in it, but as being held as differences in unity.

The more the universe is examined and understood, the more apparent does it become that it is a single self-consistent whole—a vast unity in which nothing is isolated or independent. Incalculably rich, indescribably varied and yet marvellously harmonised, the whole universe is regulated by the Will of one Supreme Being and not by a multitude of independent and co-ordinate wills.

East with its ethical ideal of personal discipline and self-refinement and West with its ethical end of social service and social efficiency, irreconcilable in man's narrowness, are harmonised into one holy shrine in His all-inclusive catholicity. North and South, poles asunder in man's puny calculation, are shaped into one wholeness in His all-embracing purpose. We feel that, as He is one, He has designed all humanity to be one, meant all this universe to be one, framed all laws to be merged in His supreme Law of Love.

We observe further that history and the comparative study of religions are also revealing the fact that all religious faiths of men in their deeper meanings are one ; science shows that all social interests are one ; ethnology declares that humanity is one ; biology establishes that life is strangely one ; astronomy and kindred sciences proclaim that all worlds unite to make one orderly harmonious universe—over all and through all of which is one Power and Intelligence and Love—*Ekameva advaita*—of the Rishis.

He is the One all-pervading Being who reconciles all things and reminds us that man in his myriad phases is an indivisible unity. In Him, the poet, the prophet, the saint, the martyr, the philosopher, the sage or whoever is exalted to that high state, are all one in spirit and substance. All poets sing the different verses of the same great Being. All prophets deliver different parts of the same great message. All saints and martyrs exemplify in their lives the different phases of the same absolute self-surrender to His Divine Being. All philosophers and sages illumine different points of the same unsolved mystery of His Being.

Likewise all great artists and scientists are one in deriving their inspiration from Him alone. He is the ultimate explanation of the analogies which exist in them all in the language of Emerson, "*They are the re-appearance of His One Mind working in many materials to many temporary ends: Raphael paints His wisdom; Handel sings it; Plato carves it; Shakespeare writes it; Wrenn builds it; Columbus sails it; Luther preaches it; Washington arms it; Watt mechanizes it.*" He, the Great God, is the One all-inspiring Master.

All service and all philanthropy is thus translated into divine illumination in and through every heart and life, because He is there, the gracious Inspirer and Sustainer. Whither can we turn if not towards Him? And how can we search if the search does not lead us unto Him?

may soar into the highest skies, plunge into the lowest deeps, reach forth to the farthest and loneliest ranges and probe into the innermost recesses ; and yet it is the same *One* we come upon. He is the *One* only, undivided, indivisible, inseparable, perfectly absolute *One*.

Thus we find the purpose and the perfection of our lives in adoring Him as the *One* God—the five fingers folded into *one* grip ; the two eyes adjusted into *one* sight ; the two ears attuned to *one* note ; the myriad pores of the body converging avenues to *one* life ; night and day the alternating dispensations of *one* Providence ; the rotating seasons diverse phases of *one* panoramic exhibition of love and beauty ; sages and saints the unbroken and perfectly harmonised witnesses of *one* wisdom and goodness, love and grace ; the gospels of the world the beads in the rosary of *one* praise from pole to pole and from end to end of the universe ; the stars above and the flowers below, the air that pours in and the light that rays forth, all, all congregated at *one* tabernacle chanting the *one* hymn of “ *The One only without a second* ” *Ekameva advitiam* of the Rishis.

Even our shallowest conception of God's transcendental attributes fills us with awe and astonishment. We feel that before Him we are feeble and powerless. We feel we are in absolute subjection. All the strength of our manhood may beat against His laws, but we cannot break them. With deepest reverence and absolute self-surrender, may we prostrate ourselves before His Foot-Stool, worship and adore Him, glorify and exalt Him, sing and praise His Holy Name !

CHAPTER V.

THE MOST DISTINGUISHING OF THE IMMANENTAL ATTRIBUTES OF GOD AS PROCLAIMED IN THE UPANISHADS.

The Rishis announce that in the beginning the Supreme Being abided in His own undifferentenced unity as alone to the alone until He decided: "*I am one, I shall become many; I shall grow forth*". (Chandogya VI. ii). Accordingly, He has come out of the veil of His unmanifested, transcendent, indivisible, inscrutable, incomprehensible, invisible existence to shine forth over, in and through the whole creation as *Anandam, Amritham, Santham, Sivam, Suddham and Sundaram*. These are known as His Immanent Attributes and will be briefly dealt with in this chapter and some in greater detail in the succeeding chapters as occasion arises.

The Supreme Being is **Anandam**, Love, Bliss, which encircles the universe, the whole round of existence—that Bliss which sweetens the bitters of earth with the nectar of heaven; which places in crucifixion the cradle of resurrection; which announces thunder as the assuring voice of Providence and employs the lightning flash as the har-binger of the radiance that reveals hidden glories; which attunes into perfect harmony all the seeming contradictions of life; which enchants the wayward into self-forgetting dedication and which discloses even in the smallest of the world's casual happenings the hourly dispensation of goodness of an ever-loving One. As He fosters love, He broadcasts *Anandam*. Out of love, we come into Being; that is the *Anandam* of creation. In love, we are secure, that is the *Anandam* of protection and preservation. Constantly, we tend towards love; that is the *Anandam* of growth. For ever, we abide in love; that is the *Anandam* of everlasting bliss. His Supreme *Anandam* in ceaseless pulsations of

rapture, fills the whole universe with one chant of glorification.

He is the *Anandam* of the mother's heart knit to the child's heart. He is the *Anandam* in the heart of every way-worn but trustful pilgrim. He is the *Anandam* that thrills with joy the heart of the humble devotee and enraptures the spirit of the reverent seeker, as he catches gleams of eternal wisdom. He is the *Anandam* of those, who, when, with the all-unfolding dawn, the sun restarts life from sleep, greet Him with their morning hymns; as He manifests Himself through that Central Luminary. Neither in the heavens nor on the earth nor in the waters underneath, does He so impressively and enrapturingly manifest Himself as *Anandam* itself as in the charm and the glory of the countenance of the God-devoted one.

He is the *Anandam* of those, who, obsessed with the passion to proclaim His Love and Beneficence, traverse the world that they may bear witness unto His goodness and grace abiding in the souls of men. And as He has brought into being this ever-enduring and ever-expanding universe even with the bounty of His love, He has designed and ordained and set to the tune of His *Anandam* the whole creation with its myriad contents, making it dance with the celestial symphony of Love. He is that soul-maddening, soul-translating *Anandam* in which not only is sorrow outlived, grief overcome and privation put down, but the very notion of sorrow, grief and privation becomes impossible unto His children. That is *Anandam* which sets the whole frame athrill with the joy of His very embrace accorded unto every child that applies itself to the supreme sacrament of worship.

To approach the Supreme Being, to hold the hands to Him, to bow the head to Him, to talk to Him, to open the heart to Him, to uplift the soul to Him and yet not to receive *Anandam* is the most lamentable of misfortunes. Yet, He

saves us from this misery and wretchedness, granting to the soul that *Anandam* which the soul not merely enjoys but truly forgets that it enjoys, because it is so suffused with it. This feeling is like the experience of the tasting of honey by a dumb man. The man feels it, relishes it, revels in it, but he cannot name it ; he cannot word it ; he cannot describe it. His whole frame thrills with the sweetness of experience, but words he has none. The tongue is utterly palsied, the thought is wholly numbed, even the heart is more than suffused—over-flowingly brimful with the joy of this taste. Such is the enjoyment of His *Anandam*. That is His gift unto us. To forget ourselves in Him is true *Anandam*. Our hearts revel in Him and crave for His companionship in unbroken *Anandam*. Our souls dance in ecstasy in Him. The saints and sages of the world, who have attained a high state of spiritual culture, have actually seen Him in spiritual visions and enjoyed *Anandam*, heavenly bliss, even on this earth. They experienced heaven frequently during their life-time and the body though alive never fettered the pinions of their soaring souls nor in any way restrained their flight into the highest heaven of communion.

The Supreme Being is **Amritham**, for, His Bliss, out of which creation has been shaped and sprung into being, knows no death and can be subject to no extinction through the in-roads of engulfing time. To Him, the Incarnate Bliss, we are united in Joyousness—*Anandam*, and in Immortal Life—*Amritham*, as He unfolds Himself throughout the ages. He is the Immortal One in whom, we, the offspring of immortality, achieve the fulfilment in heavenly perfection of our being. The shining miracle of all miracles, the crowning blessing of all blessings, is that He starts us as mortals and perfects us as immortals.

According to some Rishis, by *Amritham* is meant nectar, ambrosia. They declare that Brahman is sweetness itself.

Says the Taittiriya Upanishad—“*The Supreme being is Sweetness indeed. The man or creature having obtained sweetness becomes loving. Human speech naturally calls Him the Sweet.*” The whole creation is full of the manifestations of His sweetness. He is so sweet that human words feel beggared, human thoughts become bankrupt and human feelings fail in utter discomfiture. He is sweet with the sweetness of the balmy breeze, of the rosy dawn, of the rainbow hue and of the gentle dew. He is sweet with the sweetness of the mountain snow, of the crystal stream, of the shining star and of the smiling flower. He is sweet with the sweetness of the abysmal main, of the refreshing shower of rain, of the star-besmangled sky and of the retreating yet beckoning horizon. He is sweet with the sweetness of the embracing mother, of the protecting father, of the enlightening preceptor, of the devoted spouse, of the trusting child, of the unfailing companion and of the self-abnegating sovereign. He is sweet with the sweetness of the penitent sinner, of the serene sage, of the silent adoring heart and above all of the divinely occupied soul.

With every drop of sweet tears from the enraptured heart, we proclaim Him as the sweet one serenely enthroned in the soul. And as we adore Him, we are suffused and surcharged with a deepening sense of His sweetness. As we seek the sole gift of His Holy Spirit unto us, we turn to Him as the Sweet God whose sweetness is proclaimed through the revolving years, whose variegated richness is disclosed in the recurring seasons and whose alternating love and fidelity are witnessed by the returning day and the reposing night.

As in healthy taste, sweetness only sharpens the relish; as in real hunger, bitterness is transformed into sweetness; even so, in the healthy soul and in the hungering heart, He, the Sweet God, is disclosed in the sweetest joys and the sharpest sorrows of life.

He is the Sweet God not only while the day shines but also in the midst of enveloping gloom, even by His impressive day, oppressive nearness. Joys come to show that He is the joy infinite. Sorrows come to proclaim too that He is the joy-conferring, joy-compelling God. Sorrows are thus sweet, even because they are heralds to joys. The alternation of joy and sorrow is as clearly part of His plan operating for the good of the human soul, as the alternation of day and night on our planet is part of His plan of our solar system.

He is the Sweet God of company, figuring and portraying His Sweetness in every face and through every smile. He is the Sweet God of solitude whispering in the inmost recesses of the heart His sweet message of ceaseless love—love, the beginning, the middle and the end alike of His purpose and bounty. He is the Sweet God imparting His sweetness unto us in creation, amplifying it in growth and perfecting it in salvation. Then alone is salvation attained when the sweetness of the sweet-imparting Deity becomes the sweetness of the sweet-praising devotee. As we glorify His name and chant His love, may the sense of sweetness so dwell in us that the whole life shall be one stream of sweetness and as it flows forth, shall duly carry the bounty of sweetness unto His sweet creation, His sweet family, the sweet ones of the Sweet God!

The Supreme Being is **Santham**, the Peace that passes all understanding, the Peace that envelopes the whole universe, the Peace of the Loving and Eternal God infused for ever in sublime tranquillity into the hearts of men and women, the Peace in which the soul rests in divine ecstasy. He is the Peace that returns to slumber in wearied humanity. He is the Peace that whispers in the ears of the sorrowing and suffering and pours in the baptism of comfort unto the penitent sinner. He is the Peace that manifests itself in love, nurses the sick and realises itself in the rule of sympathy. He is the Peace in which the world moves in perfect harmony.

The Supreme Being is **Sivam**, the Supreme Good with all the attributes of Goodness and Blessedness in infinite intenseness, the fountain-flood of Love and Mercy, Compassion and Pity, Forgiveness and Grace ; that Love which has begotten our little souls, which planned the minutest details of our lives even before we were brought to see the light of the world, which protects us at all times from all dangers which beset our earthly existence ; that Goodness which foresees the provision of milk in the mother's breast for the sustenance of the child even before its birth and stocks in the store-house of nature whatever is required for the growth and upkeep of our individual bodies, which likewise gives directly to every soul knowledge, feeling and power which are essential for the growth of our spiritual life ; that Goodness which has garnished the firmament with a whole host of radiant orbs, sending the sun forth from his chamber every morning with joy and strength to shed his cheering light over the face of creation and to draw blooming life from the cold bosom of the ground ; that Love which has made the whole vital frame of man into a world in itself, of bounty and joy, the Eye on whose little orb is pencilled the beauty of heaven and earth, for the mind to perceive and know and possess and rejoice over as if the whole universe was its own ; the Ear in whose secret chambers are generated harmonious numbers in the melodies of rejoicing nature, in the welcomes and salutations of friends, in the love whispers of parents and children with all the sweetness which dwells in the tongue of man ; that Goodness which feeds all that swarm of ants in unbroken line of active life, each carrying its grain of food in its mouth ; that Goodness which sends us the blessing of rain which, as it descends, travels through miles of space, is first collected, then dispersed, evidencing a whole system of economy of production and distribution ; that Love which creates in us a quenchless craving for communion and companionship with our Creator ; that Blessed-

ness which maintains our life in harmony with His implanted in the universe and in our own spiritual nature which makes us feel joy only in that which gives joy to Him.

In Him as the Divine Love, space and infinity, time and eternity, individuality and humanity, senses and spirits all integrated into the union of reciprocity and confraternity. He is that *Sivam*, the self-expressing God of Love, whose *Leela*—divine delight—is this life in ever-unfolding, never-ending Providence with a pre-ordained, heavenly, immortal destiny guaranteed unto every soul.

It is His loving Providence that spreads the table of His feast on the face of the earth in which friend and foe share alike. He withholds not His bounty of happiness from His other creatures. To them also He freely distributes the pleasures and delights of life. The ever-increasing currents of His mercy flow all over the world. Even a single drop of water holds numberless animals enjoying illimitable happiness. The herds in the forest glades chewing the cud with serene satisfaction, birds in the groves pouring forth heart-melting melodies, trees wearing gladdened faces under the fresh showers of the spring,—all bear witness to His eternal goodness. It is His loving Providence that comes down as rain and unclothes beauty on the earth. He covers the deep as with a garment. The trees in the woods are singing to Him. The earth sees Him and is glad. He makes a place for the swallow to lay her young in and the sparrow talks to Him in her nest. He gives the dove her silver wings and tips her feathers with gold. He is as water in a thirsty land. He is our Shepherd who never slumbers. He is our fortress, our castle, our refuge. We seek His holy sanctity and we are sheltered under His wings.

All goodness and love on earth is but a faint reflection of His Infinite Goodness. All the happiness of life flows from His goodness. All the sanctity of the soul comes from

His grace. The love of father and mother, husband and wife, brother and sister, friend and teacher, saint and philanthropist, is but a particle of His unfathomable love.

As *Sivam*, He is the Universal Mother. His love transcends the intensest and the tenderest love of a human mother. His bounty supplies the homely wants of the entire vegetable and animal creation. Man, cast in His image, is endowed with His wisdom, placed under His moral lead, accorded His personal regard and blessed with the richest share in His parental love. And of all His marvels, this is the most marvellous that we are trusted, honoured, anointed participators in His purposes, as we are evolved and matured into the full destiny of our life. Notwithstanding our simulative propensities which draw us away from Him, He remains with us every moment of our life as our Guardian Angel, feeding us, clothing us, nursing us, teaching us, inspiring holy thoughts, feelings and desires in our souls, helping us in our adversities and afflictions, doubts and difficulties, struggles and strifes, troubles and turmoils, comforting us in our disappointments and griefs, sorrows and tribulations and constantly leading us on and on in the path of eternal progress.

He is the *Kalpitharu* of His devotees, the *Chintamani* of His *Bhaktas*, the Lord of our hearts and our constant, never-failing companion through our life everlasting. His besetting and overshadowing Presence guarantees our protection and His watchfulness over us in all conditions of our existence. The life of every living being is a field of His incessant activity and the care of His special Providence.

As *Sivam*, the Supreme Being is our Eternal Refuge. In health, He is the refuge of jubilant activity. In sickness, He is the refuge of balmy comfort. In prosperity, He is the refuge of grateful enjoyment. In adversity, He is the refuge of trustful contentment. In the day of light and knowledge, He is the refuge of inspiration. In the day of

darkness and ignorance, He is the refuge of waiting beseeching supplication. In the day of grace, He is refuge of the heart's delight, the soul's joy. In the day of sorrow and sin, He is the refuge of trust and hope—the Friend, the never-failing Friend. In time, He is our refuge as the all-unifying, the all-retaining, the all-sustaining. In eternity, He is our refuge, as our endless progress ceasing beatitude, limitless aspiration and growth. We take refuge in Him as a permanent settlement of life and destiny, to be His always, wholly His for ever.

He is the Home, the Asylum and the Temple of Human Society is nothing but a harmonious co-operation of many souls, sustained by one hope, led by one motive, towards the fulfilling of the same divine purpose. In that army, in that magnificent congregation, all will be united in glorifying Him as the common Master and Lord, whose kingdom is our realm, whose order is our unailing command and the fulfilment of whose purposes is the highest purpose of our life.

As *Sivam*, the Supreme Being is *Bhakta Jeevana*, the vital secret of the whole being of His devotees. We cannot exist without His existence, we can conceive of no life apart from Him. Awake or asleep, doing or resting, thinking or working, laughing or weeping, suffering or rejoicing, assimilating or expressing, we live in Him. As observed by the ancient sages (Kenopanishad), the eye sees not Him but *by* Him; the ear hears not Him but *by* Him; the tongue speaks not of Him, but *by* Him; the taste tastes not Him, but *by* Him; the hand grasps not Him, but *by* Him; the foot walks not unto Him but *through* Him; the world shows not Him but is *shown of* Him. He is the root, the source, the support, the mysterious essence of the whole existence of His devotees. Unto His devotee, He is the food that nourishes, the drink that refreshes, the breeze that regales, the light that cheers, the beauty that charms. His existence de-

wholly upon Him. His hopes have their warrant in His mercy. His foresight has its fountain-source in His Providence. By himself nothing ; imbued, in-dwelt, inspired by Him, he becomes wise, virtuous and worthy.

What can we do without rendering our homage unto Him? What can we think without thinking of Him? What can we feel without feeling after Him? Our deeds are but crude reproductions of His designs. Our thoughts are but dim reflections of His ideas. Our affections are but faint imitations of His mercies. Verily, He is *Bhaktajeevana*.

As *Sivam*, He is that Mercy that manifests itself in every throb of the heart, in every beat of the pulse, in every sight, in every sound, in every ray of the sun, in every drop of the dew. Every drop in the deep ocean is His crystal Mercy. Every star in the expansive firmament is His beaming Mercy. Every flower that makes the earth an Eden is His fragrant Mercy. Every lisp of the innocent babe fresh from His Bosom is His cheering Mercy. Every look of confidence and trust from eye to eye is His unifying Mercy. Every word of genuine insight, wherever spoken, is the gospel of His own illuminating Mercy. Every heave of the breath signifies a two-fold Mercy, His incoming, life-bringing and His out-going, refuse-removing Mercy. In fact, the body, the mind, the heart, the soul, all proclaim the abundance of His Mercy. The door of His Mercy is never shut, the gate of His Forgiveness is never closed upon the suppliant. No one has shed the tears of penitence at His threshold but has had the flood-gates of His Mercy opened out and his sins washed away. He does not judge us by His greatness but cleanses us by the waters of His Grace.

Above all, He is the all-unifying Love that matures re-vivifying hope, regenerating faith and redeeming goodness into complete, trustful self-surrender unto His Will.

The Supreme Being is **Suddham apapaviddham**—*the Central Self-subsistent Sun of Immaculate Holiness*. He is

the cause, condition and source of all Righteousness. It shines in us as our Conscience which is His Voice and true mirror of His perfect Holiness and Love, and through which He speaks to us and guides us through the dark way of life.

Incidentally we may observe here that mere cause and design, mere will and intelligence, cannot, even when combined, enable us to think of the Creative Reason as righteous; although obviously, until so thought of, the Reason is by no means to be identified with God. The greatest conceivable power and intelligence, if united with hatred of righteousness and love of wickedness, can give us only the idea of a wicked being; and if separated from all moral principles and character, only that of a being lower than man. The existence of the moral principle within us, of a conscience which witnesses against sin and on behalf of holiness, is of itself evidence that God must be a moral Being, One who hates sin and loves holiness and that the purpose which threads together the ages cannot but be a righteous purpose.

And for the fulfilment of this mysterious purpose, of man's apparently composite nature, He evolves in him a moral sense, a sense of moral good and moral evil, a sense of virtue and vice, by which alone he has risen higher than animals in the scale of existence. He designs the eternal growth of our souls in the strength of righteousness. He is that Holiness which, whether in the dealings or feelings with man and man or in the bounty of His Providence in the severity of His most just judgments—most of all in the troubles and afflictions of the righteous—brings us face to face with Him, straight into His Divine Presence that Holiness that has designed for evolving in us all that is high and pure, noble and sublime, good and divine. He is His name, All earth exults in His Holiness. We are so little and imperfect before Him.

He is *Purity Absolute*,—in one word, the Divine One. How sacred, how sanctifying, how really transfiguring that word '*Divine*' is in its import, is felt only in the life of His true devotee. There, Truth incarnates itself, Wisdom flashes forth in spontaneity; Infinity becomes the abode of the soul; Bliss constitutes the very breath of life; Immortality is the eternally guaranteed progress of the spirit into perfection. To be caught in the harmony of His Eternal Song is the very purpose of our being. He is the Perfect One; and in Him for ever we abide in righteousness, receiving, realising and reproducing His holiness.

Solitary and still, serene and transcendent, yet going through the cosmic process of the descending and revealing God, the expanding and regenerating God, the redeeming and ascending God, He enables us to reach our eternal destiny and realise the fulfilment of His holy purpose in *Suddham apapaviddham*, sinlessness and flawlessness, sanctity and holiness. In His holiness, we live, lost to all that is of passion, impervious to all that is tempting, invulnerable to the assaults of sorrows and tribulations, allured by nothing but the desire to revel in Him and His adoration. This is what the Rishis mean by the *immortality* of the human soul. In other words, we are ever blessed in Him, in the perfection of divinely sanctified humanity even in this life.

The Supreme Being is **Sundaram**, *the bright, the shining, the gold-coloured, the luminous*, glittering in all the charm and grace of the Beautiful Entrancing One. Crowned with all stars in the firmament, decked with all flowers on the earth, radiant with the combined unquenchable lustre of all celestial luminaries, He is so enrapturing! He, the Holy Lord of the universe, the Charmer of our hearts, the Captivator of our souls, is so ravishing in beauty! Bliss and Holiness, Goodness and Love, are unified, perfected, harmoniously blended and personified in Him as *Sundaram*. He is physical, moral, and spiritual beauty in perfection.

What a charming and lovely smile we see playing on His supremely beautiful Countenance! What a pure holy ki emanates from His sweet enchanting Lips! What an e dearing and soul-maddening embrace proceeds from His encircling Arms! His Voice that inspires and enlighter that chides and chastises, that commands and rescues, moral music in perfection! Who that has seen His beau can forget it! Who that has heard His sweet voice in co science can turn away from it! Who that has tasted t nectar of His delicious Presence can lay aside the swe cup!

Even our poorest conception of God's immanent attributes fills us with love and admiration, gratitude a trust, reverence and wonder, joy and enthusiasm, strengthe our bonds of union with Him as our Father Supreme a Mother Divine and prompts us ever to worship Him in t inmost sanctuary of our heart, pray, to Him for wisdom a love, holiness and bliss, strive after deeper and deeper spiritu union with Him day by day.

We thus realise that the Supreme Being is the One, t All Perfect One, the One of numberless glories and grac and that He is the One only object of our worship a adoration. Probing into the depths of our own instincti apprehension of Him, we may seek to voice our experien of His attributes and aspects. But out-numbering our mo extravagant count of the attributes and aspects of t Deity, He is vast and rich in a measure we can only wo as Infinite and incomparably glorious. Would we kno Him in His fulness, we should desire the impossible. Bu would we have him in all the wealth of His self-givi grace and goodness, our realised blessing in it would interminably rich. What He is in all the illimitable, i exhaustible profundity of His Being, who knows but Hi self? But what he would disclose unto us through tir without end, over regions without bound, along approach

without number, with degrees of intimacy that brook no distance and no difference, should suffice to make us realise with rejoicing how unutterably near and dear He is unto us.

The Rishis urge that the attributes described in this and the preceding chapter are not the Supreme Being's qualities merely, but the real essence of His own Being. *He is Truth itself, Wisdom itself, Infinity itself, Unity itself, Bliss itself, nothing but Immortality itself: He is transcendent Peace itself, inexhaustible Goodness itself, immaculate Holiness itself, and entrancing Beauty itself.* Him, we call by many names. But we are saved and sanctified only by perceiving Him as the One in whom all these attributes and aspects inhere as the essential elements of His Being.

With every pang of writhing contrition, with every glow of trusting hope, with every new revelation of His marvellous truth, homely yet saving, with every comfort that comes in the hour of sorrow, with every strength graciously granted in the hour of frailty and weakness, with every companionship vouchsafed in direst solitude and loneliness, we receive His merciful gifts, priceless bounties, inestimable blessings, every hour of our life. In the beauty that emerges in the charms of nature, in the might that is revealed in the immovable mountain and the absorbing ocean, in the irresistible tornado, in the unconquerable strength of the sun above and the earth below, in the mighty sweep of planets ranging through immensities of space, yet poised in marvellous accuracy and marshalled with unfailing precision, in the mysteries of nature revealed unto the searching enquirer, in the surprises of a benevolent providence and in the marvels of ingenious adaptations; in all these we behold His own direct Self working out the salvation of the world.

The Supreme Being, who, in the beginning, abided in his own undivided unity, preferred, as already stated above, in His love and mercy to be figured forth in manifold and

multiplied creation and He did again deign to re-integrate the whole of His limitless creation into the recess and embrace of His own undivided singleness. We are but the visionaries of the fleeting phenomena, we perceive only the shadows. But, by His grace and mercy, as the eyes are closed, the heart is opened ; as the senses are sealed up, the spirit within is unveiled ; and we behold Him, behind the phenomena beyond the shadows, as the One Eternal Reality ; and we rejoice that thus we are led by Him into the Holy of Holies. There, in the inmost shrine of His eternal presence, what are we, where are we, except as mere glimpses and as surmises, expressions of His profound Reality ? As He has, in His mercy, taken us thus far, may He grant that even the semblance of difference, even the appearance of separation, does fade away and He be all-in-all ! That is the end, the fulfilment, the culmination and triumph of this life which He has vouchsafed unto us ; to know nought but Him, to delight in nought but in Him. May we have no separate existence apart from Him ! May He make us a reflection, a replica of His Own Self, even as the child bears marked identity with the mother !

The Rishis proclaim that as Truth, God is the essence ; as Wisdom, He is the purpose ; as Infinity, He is the absolute ; as Joy, He is the riches ; as Immortality, He is the glory ; as Peace, He is the stability ; as Goodness, He is the fulfillment ; as Unity, He is the perfection of our lives. Thus, emerging from Him, abiding in Him, growing in Him, rejoicing in Him, and rendering back unto Him, our human body becomes the chosen medium of His love and the favored shrine of His Holiness. Thus we are proved the true children of His Holy Spirit, the *atman* being ever the self-unfolding offshoot from the *Paramatman*, both, as the Rishis have said, of the same name co-habitant and co-essential, rejoicing unitedly like two birds on the same tree, to wit, in the human body, the one enjoying the sweet fruits of the

while the other sees and enjoys, *i.e.*, finds enjoyment in the very act of the former enjoying the fruits. (Svetasvatara and Mundaka). In other words, through the self-realisation of the eating bird, the seeing bird also rejoices. Therein is His eternal self-abnegation, beneficence and goodness. He is not, however, a mere on-looker, a mere enjoyer of the enjoyment of the *atman*. In the minutest of the minute which man's searching curiosity cannot reach, in the grandest of the grand which man's soaring imagination cannot measure, through all the countless contents of the universe, He discloses and reveals Himself as the embracing and enrapturing *Paramatman*. Through every mote and particle of our being, through every fibre and nerve, we feel His Spirit pulsating, thrilling and vivifying. Life presses in through every pore of the body, flows in through every sense, surges in through every thought and swells in through every feeling. (Chandogya). We are wholly immersed in Him. In His matchless mercy and abounding grace, He deigns to take possession of us, to accept us, to value us and to rejoice in us.

The Brahman of the Rishis is the Supreme Companion, Guide, Strengtheners, the valiant in the hero, the humane in the philanthropist, the trustful in the martyr, the serene in the sage, the growing in the child, the rejuvenating in the sick, the hopeful in the sorrowing, the struggling in the sinning, the aspiring in the lowly; the pure in the pious, the divine in the holy, the enduring in the patient. He is the Essence, the Inmost Spirit, the Eternal Verity, the irrepressible Certitude in one and all.

According to the Rishis (Kenopanishad), the Supreme Being is the Heart of the heart, the Life of the life, the Eye of the eye, the Ear of the ear, the Mind of the mind, the Speech of the speech, the Light of the light, the Personal Creative Force, the Supreme Will, the Knowing, Intending and Acting Mind. Seated in the centre of the universe, radia-

ting in unquenchable effulgence from the farthest extremity of space, enduring from all eternity, and yet perennially folding the wonderful pageantry of time and incident, He all-in-all, alike transcending and pervading, at once immanent and self-contained—the perfect Lord of the universe.

The Law that sways and sustains, the Light that illumines and interprets, the Power that guides and controls, the Wisdom that plans and designs, the Providence that creates and fosters, the Love that cherishes and saves, He is in-all unto us.

According to the Rishis, He is the only Reality, before and behind, about and around, above and ahead of eternally encompassing us—the basis and foundation, the true substance, the enduring Essence of the whole round existence; that which shines in the star, blooms in the flower, sings in the nightingale, smiles in the rainbow, dwells in the child; that permanent, lasting, all-penetrating, sustaining Reality in many forms, in diverse shapes weaving itself into the very structure of being. But from Him, void of Him, abstracted from Him, what were the world, what were this solid world, what were these radiant orbs, what were this bracing atmosphere? Mere shadows, fleeting shadows, unsubstantial dreams, vanishing mists dwell in us, filling us, permeating us, shaping us. From Him, the tongue has learnt the magic art of speech. From Him, the eye has acquired its wondrous power of sight. From Him the ear has derived its marvellous capacity to receive and record every whisper. Aye, every faculty is a mirror for the impression, for a faithful reflection of the impressions and manifestations of His Life.

To sum up, contained in Himself in the beginning as *Satyam—jnanam—anantham* in His unmanifested and transcendent Existence, coming out into and becoming immanent in the universe as *Anandarupamamritam*, prospering and perfecting it as *Santham—Sivam—Sundaram*, resuming it

Adwaitam, sanctifying the soul through all eternity as *Suddham-Apaviddham*, the Supreme Being constitutes the whole cycle, the perfect consummation, of revelation, evolution, perfection and sanctification. In other words, He, the Unmanifest, emerging as the Manifest, the Manifest functioning as the Merciful, the Merciful winning as the Beautiful, the Beautiful captivating as the Adorable, the Adorable for ever enduring as the Blissful, is the Supreme God of all perfection. He is at once the God to be contemplated with awe-struck reverence and the Lord to be worshipped by humble, adoring souls and the Parent and Friend to be loved and held dear with devoted, delighted, self-dedicated hearts. Thus, He is to His worshippers in spirit and in truth, in love and righteousness, the One All-Perfect God, the inexhaustible emanation, illimitable expansion, ever-progressive illumination, ever-sanctifying beatification. In His manward descent, He makes Himself felt and adored as the Indwelling Spirit. Man, sense-shrouded, proves himself in his God-ward ascent to be the pilgrim of eternity with an ever-expanding vision of ineffable glory. Man thus realises that the whole universe is the consecrated Temple of God, the soul His holy shrine, the conscience His sacred oracle, duty His divine ordinance, truth, wherever proclaimed, His imperishable gospel, love His perfect rule, life a progressive pilgrimage, humanity His abounding grace. He further interprets all law as God's method, force as His will and matter as His localised potency; esteems the world as a reflection, the soul as a vision and history as a panoramic representation of His nature and His purpose. This, according to the Rishis, constitutes the complete process of the beatification of man, the glorification of the Supreme Being, and the establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven.

CHAPTER VI.

THE GOD-VISION OF THE RISHIS AND THE CO RATIVE TESTIMONY OF MODERN SCIENCE THI

There are in the human soul what are called in self-evident truths, *atmapratyaya*, say the Rishis, which are known spontaneously and which we cannot put to logical form. They require no conscious effort to be brought into view. No process of logical reasoning is a prerequisite to their recognition. They spring right from the consciousness of our nature and are deeper and firmer than logical reasoning. For instance, there is our reliance on the permanent uniformity of the laws of nature by which we measure certain phenomena always happen in a certain way. The fact that the sun rose to-day is no logical proof that the sun will rise to-morrow. Yet how strong our conviction in the truth of the latter! That the grain grew last year does not prove by syllogistic deduction that the grain will grow next year and yet where is there a confidence stronger than this? Our conviction of the reality of the external natural world—the reality of the visible, tangible world—reality only in relation to the Supreme Being, as we shall see later on—is an instance of the same description.

The Sense of causation is one such involuntary intuition and is inseparable from the human mind in all phases of its development and is universal. Even undeveloped minds such as those of children are conscious of it. If we see a painting, we know there is a painter. If we hear music, we know there is a musician. If we read a book, we know there is a writer of it. When we see a vessel spreading her sails and majestically riding on the billows of a stormy sea, we conclude that she has a pilot on board. The work of a product necessarily involves a worker or producer. Therefore, when we see works or products infinitely beyond the power of man, then we know that the power resides in some

else who is super-human. In the same manner, we cannot observe the glories of the firmament above us, its infinite extent, its beauty, and the imperishable, ever-progressive soul within us, and the marvellous skill wherewith every plant and animal and individual self has its wants cared for and yet fail to see that there must be a Supreme Being, an Intelligent Maker of the visible and the invisible world. We cannot receive good without thinking of a bestower of good. We cannot rest in the sense of bounties without some conception of a donor. The mind craves after it. It would be almost a miserable life which was spent in the continuous reception of bounties from an unknown hand. Man would become restless and enfevered to find out the benefactor. Gratitude demands expression, enforces search for the giver. Hence the ceaseless life-long search and pursuit of the Rishis in quest of the Supreme Being through various spiritual *sadhanas* and their eventual success in discovering Him and their immersion in His Bliss. One of the outstanding characteristics of the Rishis is that they were never satisfied unless they preached to thousands around them the truths they discovered and shared with them the bliss they themselves enjoyed. Even as the flower blossoms not for its own pleasure, even as the stream flows not for its own benefit, even as the tree stands not for its own comfort, even as the mountain stands not for its own majesty, the lives of Rishis are not meant solely for their own advancement but as a source of strength to the whole of humanity. They accordingly went forth, each one of them, in ecstatic raptures as the humble instruments of the Supreme Wieler of the destinies of mankind, proclaiming to the world :

"I have discovered the Sweet God. I have seen the Great Spirit. Listen to me, ye sons of Immortal Bliss, even ye who live in the heavenly abode, I have found the Ancient One ; I

have known the Supreme Being whose Light shines forth from beyond all darkness and knowing Him alone you shall be saved."

The Supreme Being proclaimed by the Rishis is a Being whose existence had no cause, no beginning and can have no end and whose non-existence is impossible, inconceivable and unthinkable. The whole nature of this unoriginated Being, or the aggregate of His attributes is uncaused and must be necessarily and immutably what it is, so that He cannot have any attribute or modification of His attributes but such as were the eternal and necessary concomitants of His existence. Whatever are the attributes of the unoriginated Being, He possesses each of them unlimitedly. In whatever manner the Supreme Being exists or is present anywhere, He exists in the like manner or is present everywhere. He is one individual uncompounded substance, identically the same everywhere and to which our ideas of whole and part, magnitude and quantity, cause and effect, time and space, are not applicable. He possesses intelligence and power unlimited and all other moral attributes that are in themselves absolute perfections. The Rishis announce that there is in the universe but one unoriginated Being who must therefore be the original fountain of all existence and the First Cause of all things, that all things owe their existence ultimately to the power of the First Cause operating according to His free will ; that creation is only the coming out of what already existed potentially in the First Cause that the Supreme Being, the Brahman, the Almighty God the First Cause and Author of all things, is a Being of infinite goodness, wisdom, mercy, justice, truth and all other moral perfections such as become the Supreme Author and Governor of the Universe. What is more, as the Efficient and Personal First Cause, the Supreme Being, say the Rishis is *sarvantaryami*, dwells secretly in all objects, sentient and insentient, animating the myriad forces in nature and bright

ening its whole face with a heavenly beauty such as no man can fully conceive, no poet can fitly describe.

The First Cause, announce the Rishis, is a Free Cause, a Will, a Spirit, a Reason, a Consciousness. The universe is a universe; that is to say, it is a whole, a unity, a system. The *First Cause* of it, therefore, in creating and sustaining it, must comprehend, act on and guide it as a systematic whole, must have created all things with reference to each other, and must continually direct them towards a preconceived goal. The complex and harmonious constitution of the universe must accordingly be the expression of a Divine Idea, of a Creative Reason.

The Universe is not, therefore, a chaos formed by chance, but ordained, ruled and controlled with obvious purpose by a Power infinitely greater than our own and by a Mind exhibiting infinitely greater wisdom and knowledge. Everything grows or comes out of something else. In other words, every event is preceded by something from which power flows forth, shaping, making and controlling that event, as our act of will shapes and makes and controls the blow of the fist or the tramp of the foot. It is a fundamental and primary fact of our nature that we cannot help thinking of all phenomena as *caused* and *controlled* by power of this kind coming from some source or other.

But unfortunately we have got into the habit of using the word '*cause*' in a very loose way. And chiefly we make confusion by talking of the laws of Nature themselves as if they were causes. We ask why the gas escape makes itself smelt so quickly all over the room, and we reply that it is *caused* by the law of the diffusion of gases; we ask why the cannon-ball that is fired off with a strong slope upwards curves round and in a few hundred yards actually strikes the ground; and the reply is that it is caused by the law of gravitation. But that is altogether a confused and confusing use of the word *cause*. The phenomenon is *explained* by

the law, but it is not *caused* by the law. For what is a law of nature? It is simply the avowal that certain phenomena always happen in a certain way. And it is a law of Nature that any two masses tend to approach each other with a force which varies inversely as the squares of their distances. But that is not the cause of the apple falling to the ground or the sea following the rising and setting of the moon; it is only the explanation of these things. Each dropping of an apple and each rise or fall of the tide is just one more act going to make up the boundless mass of facts which we gather up and bind together, purely and solely for convenience of thought, under one law, the law of gravitation.

What we want to know is the cause of this very widespread fact that bodies do move towards one another in the way stated in the law of gravitation, and stating the law which is only stating that they always do so does not bring us a hair's breadth nearer to the cause. There must be something or other like the influx of our will-power into our muscles, when the surface of the sea moves towards the moon and when the apple moves towards the ground and when two drops of water lying close together on a perfectly smooth horizontal sheet of glass are unable to rest close together and actually move up to each other and coalesce in one big drop instead of two small ones. There is a pull somewhere like the pull we give when we ring the door bell. Who or what pulls then? Does the moon pull the sea, the earth the apple, one drop the other drop? No, moon and earth and drop are simply masses of matter. The mind cannot form the idea of their pulling without for the moment thinking of them as alive and exercising will-power. But they are not, so far as we know, alive. They have, so far as we can judge, no will-power. Who or what pulls them? We are compelled to believe that, apart from the big or small masses of matter themselves, there is in every case what we call a *force*, that is, a power like our will-power

which does the pulling—only that it always does the pulling according to the same laws, whether with big masses or little ones, whether on earth or in the sun or through the vast spaces which seem so empty, lying between the world masses which are scattered through the heavens.

What then is this wondrous *force*? We do not actually observe it in the external world at all. What we perceive is only the following of one event by another. But we believe that this succession is impossible without an active conscious *force* behind it. This impels us to see that the most important principle of physical science, the law of universal causation, is really the revelation, the mode of working, of an eternal, unchangeable, self-conscious and self-determining Spirit in nature which must necessarily possess intellect and will, intelligence and motive.

Again, the picture which modern Science draws of the universe is indeed surpassingly sublime. It says that the universe is filled with force which flows through every atom of matter, solid, liquid, gaseous, throughout the infinite area of the boundless whole. The things which naturally give us the highest conception of force and majesty are the grand bodies that march so ceaselessly through the heavens, the tidal movements of oceans from end to end of the globe, or the fall of huge masses under the power of gravity; but all this energy is as nothing in comparison with that which is found to lie in the atoms. It is the nature and force of the atoms that give its shape to the crystal, its quality to the acid or alkali, their colour, odour, softness or hardness to substances. It is the atoms that build up every individual body from a drop of water to a whirling sun.

Take the minutest particle of matter which the eye can see. That itself is a whole universe of energy. Within its bounds, molecules are vibrating, darting from one side to another with inconceivable velocity all the time. And the like is going on in every particle of matter from here away

to the most distant star whose light takes several millic of *light* years to reach us. Imagination reels before t effort to conceive this tremendous force pulsating w one beat from end to end of the universe, if there were a ends at all. But it gives us the firm conception in respor to the sense of causality in us that every individual moti be it ever so minute, is, in fact, the direct expression o power akin to the will-force which we know in ourselv Does this not give us a truly transcendent idea of God the *Supreme Force* that fills and penetrates and binds eve atom of matter in the universe? This leads us also to the escapable philosophical conclusion that He, without who mandate even an ant could not pass out of existence and no sparrow would fall to the ground, whose Conscious Energy concentrated in every particle of the ant's body, in eve feather of the sparrow, in every thread of down on each feath and in every chemical atom in each thread, for whose care mote floating in a sun-beam is too minute, cannot be heedl of a human soul looking forth with wonder at the heav of heavens or indifferent to the heart that approaches H in reverent love and prayer.

It is this sublime truth which *Rishi Yajnavalkya* declar when he described the Supreme Being in the *Brihadaranya Upanishad* as "*The One who dwells in the earth and the heav within the earth and within the heaven, whom the earth a the heaven do not know, whose body the earth and the heav are, and who pulls the earth and the heaven within.*"

The Rishi further goes on postulating likewise in great detail the immanent, binding and **pulling Power** of God eleven other natural phenomena, *viz.*, in the water, the fire, t sky, the air, the sun, the moon and stars, the ether, t darkness, the light, then in the individual self, finally in t eight organs, *viz.*, the breath, the tongue, the eyes, the ear the mind, the skin, knowledge and the seed.

In other words, fire, air, earth and water, thunder, lightning, rain and wind, herb, shrub, plant and tree, insect, bird, beast and man are all aglow with His pulling Power and vitalising Presence. Every object, every being is His temple, great or small, to which all the departments of science open up a high road. Steam and electricity, light and heat, ether and sound, directly reveal Him. The force of gravitation is only a beautiful vista through which He is descried. The microscope and the telescope like sacred eyes reveal His glory and splendour in the far-off heavens invisible to the naked eye. The movements of the rolling planets above reveal Him as a Mighty Architect who holds those stupendous orbs in His Hand. In the movements of the winds, we distinctly feel the breath of Him who rides over the whirlwind and shakes the universe by His Power. The more we study the mathematics and the mechanics of physical forces, the more vividly do we see Him, the Great Mathematician and Mechanic, who has constructed this wondrous mechanism. Every department of knowledge leads us into His immediate Presence. The whole universe becomes His *Sanctum Sanctorum*, the Holy of Holies, in which we always worship and adore Him as the Everlasting Light, the Author and Giver of life, the Maker of all suns, the Fountain-Flood of all Truth, Wisdom, Love and Righteousness, the Eternal, Unchangeable One. We likewise commune with Him as the God of Astronomy and Meteorology, the God of Mathematics and Mechanics, as the God of Electricity and Magnetism, the God of Winds and Tides, the God of Light and Sound, the God of Eclipses and Comets, the God of Engineering and Navigation, the God of Agriculture and Manufacture—in fact as the all-comprehending, all-penetrating, all-sustaining, all-ordering, all-harmonising, all-unifying Personal Providence who animates and regulates, directs and guides, controls and quickens every one of life's manifold spheres.

Again, in reply to searching questions put to him in the court of King Janaka by Vachakanavi Gargi, an enlightened lady philosophical enquirer, regarding *ether*, *Rishi Yajnavalkya* says: "*Ether* is woven like warp and woof in the *Akshara*, the Imperishable Being". He then describes the invisible and intangible nature of this Being and winds up by glorifying His sovereignty.

On account of the importance of the matter, I am inclined to reproduce below the questions of the enquirer and the answers of the Rishi (*Brihadaranyaka*—Chap. III—8th *Brahmana*—1).

Gargi said: "O Yajnavalkya, as the son of a warrior from the Kasis or Videhas might string his loosened bow, take two pointed foe-piercing arrows in his hand and rise to do battle, I have risen to fight thee with two questions. Answer me these questions." Yajnavalkya said: "Ask, O Gargi". She said: "O Yajnavalkya, that of which they say that it is above the heavens, beneath the earth, embracing heaven and earth, past, present and future, tell me in what is it woven, like warp and woof?" Yajnavalkya said: "That of which they say that it is above the heavens, beneath the earth, embracing heaven and earth, past, present and future, that is woven like warp and woof, in the ether (*akasa*)". She said: "I bow to thee, O Yajnavalkya, who has solved me that question. Get thee ready for the second". Yajnavalkya said: "Ask, O Gargi". She said: "In what then is ether woven, like warp and woof?" He said: "O Gargi, the Brahmanas call this *Akshara* (the imperishable). It is neither coarse nor fine, neither short nor long, neither red (like fire) nor fluid (like water); it is without shadow, without darkness, without air, without ether, without attachment, without taste, without smell, without eyes, without ears, without speech, without mind, without light (vigour), without breath, without a mouth (or door), without measure, having no within and no without; it devours nothing and no one devours it. By the command of that *Akshara* the Imperishable, O Gargi, sun and moon stand apart. By the command of that *Akshara*, O Gargi, heaven and earth stand apart. By the command of that *Akshara*, O Gargi, what are called moments (*nimesha*), hours (*muhurta*), days and nights, half months, months, seasons, years, all stand apart. By command of that *Akshara*, O Gargi, some rivers flow to the

East from the white mountains, others to the West or to any other quarter. Whosoever, O Gargi, without knowing that *Akshara* (the imperishable) offers oblations in this world, sacrifices, and performs penance for a thousand years, his work will have an end. Whosoever, O Gargi, without knowing this *Akshara* departs this world, he is miserable (like a slave). But he, O Gargi, who departs this world, knowing this *Akshara*, he is a Brahmana. **That Brahman, O Gargi, is unseen, but seeing ; unheard, but hearing ; unperceived, but perceiving ; unknown, but knowing. There is nothing that sees but it, nothing that hears but it, nothing that perceives but it, nothing that knows but it. In that Akshara then, O Gargi, the ether is woven, like warp and woof."**

Another Rishi, Sandilya, in the Chandogya Upanishad, visualises the Supreme Being as—

"The Intelligent whose body is spirit, whose form is light, whose thoughts are true, whose nature is like ether (Omnipresent and Invisible), from whom all works, all desires, all sweet odours and tastes proceed ; He who embraces all this, who never speaks and is never surprised."

Yet another Rishi in the same *Upanishad* identifies ether with Brahman Himself on account of its invisibility, intangibility and all-diffusiveness and says :

"And the ether which is around us is the same as the ether which is within us, that is the ether within the heart. That ether in the heart (as Brahman) is Omnipresent and Unchanging."

Let us see what modern science has to say about *ether*. It says it is subtler than *force*, surrounds every particle of matter, penetrates every body, fills all space and pulsates with life. *But we cannot see it*. The hardest iron is not impervious to it. The most complete atmospheric vacuum, even the desert voids that reign between star and star, are full of it and the absence of common matter only serves to transmit the better the etherial waves. A ray of light passing from the sun to the earth is a column of ether in vibration. At every point, ether exerts force of enormous intensity. In comparison with the bulk of ether, ordinary

matter forms but a trifling part of the universe. For, even if we disregard the ether diffused through ordinary matter and interplanetary spaces, and suppose the whole of our solar system filled with ordinary matter, the proportion between it and the etherial sphere whose radius is the distance of the nearest fixed star, is said to be only as one to eleven trillions. Though the medium of vision, ether and its vibrations are farther beyond all visibleness than the tiniest molecule. Though more tenacious than steel, we move through it constantly without feeling it. Though so enormous is its pressure, no balance can weigh it. Though touching us on every side every second, no touch of ours can detect it. As Professor Tyndall has said, "*The domain in which this motion of light is carried on lies entirely beyond the reach of our senses. The waves of light require a medium for their formation and propagation, but we cannot see or hear or feel or taste or smell this medium. How then has its existence been established? By showing that by the assumption of this wonderful, intangible ether, all the phenomena of optics are accounted for with a fulness and clearness and conclusiveness which leaves no desire of the intellect unfulfilled.*"

Again what has been stated above is true of that which the science of mechanics rests on—uniform force and rectilinear motion. No eye has seen or shall see it. So also, in electricity, magnetism, thermodynamics, the subtle analysis of modern investigation has banished altogether the former theories of material fluids and substituted the conception of invisible forces. The scientific energies now believed in are not physical things but mental data. Gravity, for example, is not a material entity but the correlate of thought to motion, the occult cause inferred by the mind where change of place is observed. None of these phenomena is visible to the physical senses. Yet they are not dismissed as mere fictions of the intellect, but believed in as established scientific truths.

Moreover, all the objects that science studies are seen in space. All the events that it traces are known as occurring in time. These two—space and time, are fundamental conditions of all science. Yet, neither space nor time is itself a material thing capable of being perceived by the senses. Shall space and time, then, be set down as figments of the brain?

If science can, of necessity, make some of the most tremendous unproven assumptions which it is possible to conceive, if science must assume in its experiments the veracity and trustworthiness of man's own faculties, of the senses and the intellect which play their part in making up all the human experiences, and above all, if science may accept the perception and the satisfaction of the reasoning powers of man and also of his memory as good proof of what no observation can discover, why should the Rishis, the seers of ancient wisdom, be debarred a similar privilege, a similar line of reasoning and argument in asserting that the phenomena of the visible and invisible, the tangible and intangible world could be accounted for only by the existence of the invisible and intangible *Akshara*, the Imperishable Being, in whom the invisible and intangible ether itself is "woven like warp and woof," a Being "*who has no form visible to the eye, whom no one can see with the eye and who is revealed through the heart, the understanding and through meditation?*"

Let us next see how modern Science and eminent scientists and philosophers bear surpassingly corroborative testimony to the God-Vision of the ancient Rishis. For the information of readers not versed in scientific enquiries, I may premise by saying that the function of Science is to observe, explain, classify and interpret the phenomena of Nature and that the method employed in scientific investigation is not different from ordinary reasoning but simply the process of common sense, critical understanding, carried out with precision, aided by the

experience of the inward man. The starting point of Science is in the observation of nature. The various senses—sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch—perceive various objects such as, star, rock, water, plant, animal and notice their varied qualities, such as, heat, cold, hardness, softness, perfumes, sounds, forms, etc. These are compared; their likenesses and differences noted. Then classifications are formed—families, species, substances, forces, laws—and, the result of these inductions, general propositions are laid down, the main principle ruling in this inductive process being to classify together the like things, separating them from the unlike and to interpret the unknown by the known not *vice versa*. And accepting, as we do, the widest possible definition of the term Nature, regarding it as inclusive of the domain of mind as well as of the domain of matter, we may assert that Science has quite properly to do with everything that concerns human life, either in the past or in the present, and whether we call it sensuous or spiritual. Scientific investigation, then, is by no means complete, its discoveries or theories cannot be looked upon as conclusive if it is not so extended as to cover the whole area of human thought and action. What man has thought and done, endured and endeavoured in bygone ages is as truly evidence of the development of life, is of as great value in building up an intelligible and reasonable system of universal truth as are those fossil remains of the flora and fauna of other epochs which the scientist rightly regards as of the first importance. Accordingly, the whole occupation of Science ever since there has been any science at all, has been in gathering up the happenings in the universe, showing that they are not irregular, but regular, classifying them, doing them up in neat bundles, each with its label bearing the name of some law of nature. That is what true Science always does and it is never at anything else at all. It does a perpetual tidying up of our observations of natural phenomena and

it cannot bear to leave any of them lying about unclassified and undocketed.

Suffice it for our present purposes to state that first of all Science laid its hands on the motions of planets and showed that they were all regular. But comets and meteors it left alone for a long while ; and the kind of narrow religion which has based the evidence of God only on exceptional events which she called miraculous, could say and did say " Yes, the motions of the planets are part of the constitution of the Universe and do not need God ; but look at the comet's tail measuring millions and millions of miles in length and sweeping across the skies and look at the shower of falling stars. God does not leave the Universe alone, you see ; here is His hand scattering these irregular lights about." But Science presently stretched out her hand and swept these also into her drawers,—did them up in bundles, labelled them and showed that they, too, were part of the regular order and not special interferences at all. And that has been the lively and sporting game of Science all along and she keeps steadily filching away all miraculous evidences one after another on which popular religion relied for its existence, and arranging them in her own territory as regular, orderly parts of the universe, till it looks as if the religion which relies on the special interference of God would ere long have nothing left at all, for Science will have parcelled out and appropriated the whole area of phenomena as belonging to her domain. This is why blind orthodox religion cries out in angry protest at every fresh advance of Science. Every such advance seems to this sort of religion to be the substituting of natural forces for the action of God in some fresh sphere. So that the progress of Science necessarily seems to be a progress towards atheism. As Science shows that natural law covers the history of the heavenly bodies, of the earth, of organic life, each of these seems to be taken away from God. And so a false theology has successively fought against

the protagonists, particularly of astronomy, geology, and execrated them as the enemies of God looked upon Science as a godless and blind teaching a sacrilegious intruder upon the domain of revealed truth. Thus among almost all denominations and phases of religion, thought there were more or less suspicion, jealousy, abuse of scientific research and physical investigation was also a fact almost equally patent that on the part of science likewise—among many at least of its representatives there was a similar hostility entertained towards religion and that not only all religious organisations but all spiritual faiths and principles were looked upon as their natural foes.

Now, things have changed completely. True Religion wherever it exists, recognises Science as divine in all knowledge. It therefore welcomes every scientific discovery which expands man's ideas and vision of the Universe and the discoverers are hailed as the prophets and messengers of God. Calumny, persecution, torture will not be their fate, days gone by, for daring to denounce popular, popularised, anointed, religious, scriptural beliefs, such as, the flatness of the earth, the myriad-hooded serpent Audishesha supporting the earth, the stationariness of the globe, the six days' creation, the six thousand years' age of the world of man, the universal deluge. A Columbus who discovered a new continent need not fear disgrace at the hands of theologians at Salâmanca, because of his inability to add support for his discovery or even a faint indication of it though under an esoteric shade, in the scriptures of religion. A Copernicus need not suppress his heliocentric theory of the heavens for thirty-six years and escape persecution only by death. A Galileo will not be tortured or compelled to recant his famous declaration that the earth moves. A Giordano Bruno will not be burnt alive for daring to assert a plurality of worlds. A Lyell for his revolution

geological conceptions and a Darwin for his astounding theory of "the descent of man" will not be execrated as the enemies of God. On the other hand, religion and science are now regarded as the complement and supplement, the natural friend and ally of each other. It is now held that science is not complete till religion in its general signification becomes one of its objects of investigation and its special signification becomes a part of science itself. Science can no more have grounds for a quarrel with religion than she can have grounds for a quarrel with the phenomena of atomic affinity, molecular vibration and molar attraction or repulsion or be at odds with the systematisation of these phenomena into laws of chemistry and electricity and with the inferring from them of chemical and electrical forces as causes.

"Science" says the great positive philosopher, Auguste Comte, "conducts God with honour to its frontiers, thanking Him for His provisional services."

Nor has religion been lagging behind in the adoption of rational methods for the elucidation of its absorbing metaphysical problems. For instance, just as science compares and classifies things in nature, religion also has divided the nature into two great groups. One group contains all natural phenomena, such as, weight, size, form, heat, colour, motion; the other, all mental or spiritual, phenomena, perception, reason, love, will, aspiration. In the one group, inertia is the law, in the other, spontaneity. In the one, necessity; in the other, freedom. In the one, the phenomena have a definite relation to space; in the other, to time. The phenomena of the one are discerned by the senses; those of the other only by consciousness. In the one group, every thing is divisible; in the other, the subject affirms its indivisibility and identity. In the one group, everything belongs to the earthly and the finite; in the other group, there is a constant attraction and rise towards that which lies higher. The two poles of modern thought—religion and science—have been

thus fortunately brought into harmonious relation with each other.

While science says "This is the way the heavenly bodies move", Religion says, "Yes, that is the way in which God moves them". While science says, "This is how the different tribes of beings have come into existence", Religion says, "Yes, that is the way how God brought them into being." While science discovers the fixed and unalterable laws that govern the actions of nature and by their study, accurately infers the nature of events that took place before the birth of sentient beings, records the childhood and youth of the present world and makes even sure predictions about its future, Religion says that these laws are only an expression of particular modes of God's manifestation. Science and Religion are thus mutual help-mates. Just as Science through the genius of a Sir J. C. Bose announces the discovery of oneness of life and the fundamental unity of creation in all its kingdoms, Religion also proclaims the profoundest truth of the unity of the Spirit that pervades all. Whereas the task of Science is to spell out unity, the work of Religion is to vision the very Spirit that constitutes unity. To every new investigation of the scientist, therefore, Religion now says 'God-speed' and to every new discovery of the *savant*, 'all-hail.' Hence my endeavour in this chapter to invoke the corroborative testimony of science and eminent scientists to the God-vision of our ancient Rishis.

Modern physical science, one cardinal principle of which is, as stated above, the unity of the whole universe, the latent truth and reality of all persistent forces, has established that the Universe is not an eternal quiescence. It is in constant change, constant motion. And these changes and motions are part of a series actually existing and progressing. No matter what intermediate causes or agencies there may have been, the mind is not satisfied to stop with any of these but passes farther and farther back seeking the *First cause*

which must sometime have first started the series. Now this *First cause* cannot be matter itself, for matter has no spontaneity of action. The essential idea of matter is that it is inert, as already stated above; remains in its present condition for ever unless disturbed by some external agency. If matter did not observe this law, no science of it would be possible. In whatever condition and position matter originally existed, in that it must always have remained. To start the evolution of the universe, therefore, some external agency, possessed of spontaneity, acting upon matter, must be inferred. As the only spontaneous agent we know of is self-conscious free-will, the Will of some Supreme Being must be regarded as The Great First Cause.

Lord Kelvin, popularly known as the Investigator of Nature, was, after a research extending over a period of sixty years, prompted to announce to the world in unequivocal language that "*the phenomena of living things, such as a sprig of mass, a microbe, a living animal and the mutual interdependence of vegetable and animal life and the wonderful design displayed in them, looked and considered as a matter of scientific investigation, compels us to conclude that there is a scientific reason for believing in the existence of a Creative Mind and Directing Power.*"

I shall give below just a few most convincing instances of the display of this Creative, Directing and Designing Mind and Power in Nature taken at random from different departments of Science.

The Mathematician, the Geologist, the Astronomer, the Naturalist, the Biologist and the Physiologist, among others, are all able to tell us that there are objects in nature which are constructed and regulated in their functions and movements according to definite and immutable laws—laws characterised by super-human wisdom, working not only for particular ends but working together in perfect harmony for the preservation and welfare of the whole universe

They will also tell us that mere chance is absolutely excluded from the operation of these laws, that everything is the result of antecedent cause ; that wherever changes or developments occur in substance or organism, they manifestly fulfil some ulterior purpose ; and whenever the power to produce such change does not exist in the subject of that change, the power must reside in something outside of it, in something which is not it ; a motive power must act apart from the substance or organism, a power, which the latter does not possess. And whenever we observe any process of this kind, a purpose or an end to be accomplished, we know with certainty that some Mind or Intelligence has had that purpose in view, and either has furnished the substance or organism with the motive power necessary for the accomplishment of the purpose, or itself works in and through the said substance or organism for effecting the purpose.

The Astronomer tells us that in the earth's circuit round the sun, an orbit of about 583 millions of miles, its average speed is between eighteen and twenty miles a second, so that in one day of twenty-four hours, it travels about a million and a half miles. The orbit is not quite an exact circle, but elliptical. The sun is not in the centre ; therefore the earth must be at one time of its revolution nearer the sun than it is at another. There are two dangers to be avoided in the earth's journey—one, the danger of its falling into the sun, when it is nearest to it and the other, the danger of its running wholly away from the sun into space, when it is farthest from it, in spite of the sun's power of attraction to keep it in its orbit. How marvellously these dangers are prevented by the earth simply hastening and slackening its speed to suit the varying conditions ! As she approaches nearer and nearer to the sun, as in winter, she has to put in greater speed in order to overcome the stronger attraction of the sun. We have to move faster to prevent our falling into the sun. Thereafter in six months' time we shall be

at our farthest distance from the sun. The sun's pull upon us will then grow weaker and we shall be in danger of flying off our track altogether unless we diminish speed and give the sun time to get a better grip upon us ; that saves us from our other peril, and instead of flying off in space, we are bent round and turn the corner in safety.

How marvellous also it is that the earth having completed its circuit round the sun and having travelled at various degrees of speed and been subject to other disturbances on its path, nevertheless, turns up to time at Greenwich to within the one-hundredth part of a second ! The earth being dead matter, its exceedingly sensible behaviour under changing circumstances, must be attributed to a Super-human Mind working it or in it, a Mind which understands fully the laws of centripetal and centrifugal motion, and imposed those laws upon our planet, as elsewhere, to carry out Its purpose of keeping it always in its orbit.

Besides, our earth is so related to the sun and the moon that seed time and harvest never fail and the ebb and flow of tides never deceive us.

There are several departments of science such as chemistry, geology, psychology, as much or even more adapted than astronomy to furnish proofs of the wisdom of a Super-human Mind ; but there is none which affords us such evidence of Its power or so helps us to realise Its Omnipresence, our own nothingness before It and the littleness of our earth in the system of creation.

The Naturalist tells us of the life and economy of the clover plant revealing secrets of its marvellous powers of self-preservation and the contrivances for its survival and reproduction. The intelligence and forethought revealed in its organisation and habits far surpass anything which the skill or mind of man could have produced. The clover is so constituted that only bees can fertilise it and the bee is so organised that one of its chief occupations is to gather

honey from the clover and by its visits unconsciously fertilise the clover seeds. Here we have one purpose manifest, *i.e.*, the reproduction of the clover which it cannot do by itself. On the other side, we have another purpose manifest, *i.e.*, the gathering of honey by the bee which involves the accomplishment of the purpose of reproduction as regards the clover. We know that the bee is no more made itself than the clover made itself and certain the bee did not make the clover nor the clover the bee. In other words, we cannot posit the power of constructing organisms in the organisms themselves, and we cannot ascribe the purpose of fertilising the clover to the bee any more than we can ascribe the purpose of furnishing honey for the bee to the clover. We see a double purpose which cannot be traced to the subjects concerned, and which is carried out by a double process which neither of them could originate, much less achieve. We find, therefore, that the adaptation of the bee and the clover to each other's purpose of which, they are not conscious, is the plan and achievement of some Intelligent, Designing and Creative Power.

The Physiologist tells us that gastric juice secreted by the stomach dissolves all aliments, but does not dissolve the stomach itself although the latter is of precisely the same nature as the aliments with which it is nourished, because it is lined with a coating or varnish which is not attacked by the gastric juice and which protects the walls which it covers. What could the most perfect art have done to protect the walls of the stomach but invent a precaution similar to that which exists in reality? And how surprising it is that an organ destined to secrete and use an agent more destructive to itself, is found armed with a protective turban which must have always co-existed with it, since otherwise it would have been destroyed before having had time to procure for itself this defence! Does this not display Intelligence of a Designing and Creative Mind?

Again, Professor Tyndall gives a very graphic description of the combination of remarkable arrangements by which the human ear is fitted to be an organ of hearing. Says he, "Finally, there is in the labyrinth a wonderful organ, discovered by the Marchese Corti, which is to all appearance a musical instrument, with its chords so stretched as to accept vibrations of different periods, and transmit them to the nerve-filaments which traverse the organ. Within the ears of men, and without their knowledge or contrivance, this lute of 3,000 strings has existed for ages, accepting the music of the outer world, and rendering it fit for reception by the brain. Each musical tremor which falls upon this organ selects from its tensioned fibres the one appropriate to its own pitch and throws that fibre into unisonant vibration. And thus, no matter how complicated the motion of the external air may be, those microscopic strings can analyse it and reveal the constituents of which it is composed." Does not this wonderful phenomenon of which the possessor of the ear is absolutely unaware, disclose the existence of a Super-human Intelligence directing it?

The Geologist tells us that inorganic products grow by accretion, by the external addition of one part to another, by one force acting upon another. The Botanist and the Biologist tell us that a vegetable or animal germ, on the other hand, sustains itself by its own power. External matter added to it is not mere accretion as in inorganic objects but assimilation, the turning of external matter to its own use by the inherent power of the germ. This wonderful process involves selection which directly carries purpose with it and confirms the existence of an Intelligent Mind behind it.

Furthermore, while in the case of inorganic matter, the cause determines the effect, the parts determine the whole, the present determines the future; in the case of organic matter, it is the effect that determines the cause, the whole

that determines the parts and the future that determines the present. The vegetable seed grows into the tree with trunk, branches, leaves, flowers and fruits—members which in their turn sustain the life of the whole tree and contribute to the production of the seed for the perpetuation of its kind. The animal germ likewise grows into the finished animal body with its complex system of organs, each devoted to a particular function and all contributing to the life and reproduction of the whole. In these instances, we see that what comes last, the completed organism with its various functions is potentially contained in the seed or the germ and determines its whole process of life and growth. But this potential or determinate existence of the effect in the cause can mean nothing else than this, that the idea or design of the effect determines or works in the cause and that it can emanate only from an Intelligent Mind.

Again, from the wise adaptation of means to ends in vegetable and animal life, the Physiologist and the Anatomist are accustomed to infer certain designs and purposes as their explanation and they freely employ this idea of design to assist them in solving the problems of their departments. Moreover, from such cases of curious adaptation, as in the life and economy of the clover and the bee explained above, Science has not only affirmed design but also some Designer, but unfortunately does not penetrate further to know more about this Designer. Religion, however, carries on the work employing the same principles of reasoning, argues from the evidences of fitness and contrivance in the world intelligent design and from the intelligent design, an Intelligent Designer of Supreme Power and Wisdom equal to the supreme work manifested in the universe of creation.

Botany tells us how the petals twine into one another to constitute the citadel of the future flower and fruit. This, says Religion, is too handiwork of a deep-sighted Genius who, as Plato observes, geometrisés everywhere. A certain

student of Plato went into a meadow and marvelled to note in countless flowers the same unfailing symmetry in the several parts. He exclaimed: 'Plato, thou spakest the truth when thou didst declare that God geometrises'.

Stronger verification, then, than this would hardly seem to be desired of Religion by anyone. Yet, if it is demanded, it has a further confirmation—that of prediction. "There is no more convincing proof" says Professor Jevons, "of the soundness of scientific knowledge than that it thus confers the gift of foresight." "Prevision," says Auguste Comte, "is the test of true theory." The astronomer's wonderful predictions of the movements of the planets, the occurrence of eclipses, the return of comets—even, as in Leverrier's discovery of Neptune, the existence and movement of a hitherto unknown body—afford the most conspicuous proof of the correctness of the Copernican system and the Newtonian Laws. By mere mathematical calculations one can map out the whole orbit of a planet precisely as the telescope may slowly trace it. Does not this disclose the unerring ways of the Great Geometrician? Once at Dublin, Sir Robert Ball, the great Astronomer, concluded, through his calculations that the transit of Venus would occur at a particular definite moment. Accordingly, he sets his telescope to the expected region of the sky, though overcast with dense clouds. At the right minute, the weather clears a while and reveals the planet as it floats majestically across the solar disc. Such is the wonderful order and correlation disclosed by astronomy. Here again Religion steps in and asks 'What ye think of this harmony!'

More than all, every fibre in a living frame, every hair on the back of a worm, the slenderest line or the faintest tint on a leaf—all are scrupulously designed and attended to in God's government. 'Nothing walks with aimless feet'. Everything has a definite purpose in the ordering of the world. If the globe became lighter by the weight of one

grass blade, its orbit would be inconceivably disturbed the crisis of a clash would at once be introduced into system of the universe.

Newton, the great discoverer of gravitation, declared "It is inconceivable that inanimate brute matter, should without the medium of *something* else which is not matter, operate upon and affect other matter without mutual contact. That gravity should be innate, inherent, and essential to matter, so that one body may act upon another through vacuum, without the mediation of *anything* else, by which their action and force may be conveyed from one to the other, is to me so great an absurdity, that I believe no man who in philosophical matters has a competent faculty of thinking can ever fall into it."

Referring to 'Force' which brings about succession of events in 'Nature', *Professor Huxley*, the celebrated physiologist, who is rightly or wrongly believed by many to be an avowed atheist and sceptic, even he states "Undoubtedly active force is inconceivable except as a state of *consciousness*, except as something, comparable to volition."

Sir John Herschel similarly says:—

"In the only case in which we are admitted to a personal knowledge of the origin of force, we find it connected, possibly by intermediate links untraceable by our faculties, but yet indispensably *connected* with volition, and by inevitable consequence with *motive*, with *intellect* and with all those attributes of mind in which—and not in the possession of arms, legs, brains and viscera—personality consists."

Kepler, the prince of astronomers, proclaiming his grand hypothesis of the law of the planetary distances in his celebrated work, "*The Harmony of Worlds*", touched the zenith of the scientific intellect when, obsessed by the conviction that in tracing out the laws of nature he was thinking of God's thoughts after him, he exclaimed awe-struck:

"O God, I think Thy thoughts after Thee. I thank Thee, my Creator and Lord that Thou hast given me this joy in Thy creation, this delight in the works of Thy Hand. I have shown the excellency of Thy works unto men, so far as my finite mind was able to comprehend Thine Infinity. If I have said aught unworthy of Thee or aught in which I have sought my own glory, graciously forgive it."

Lyell, the great geologist, concludes both his 'Elements of Geology' and 'Principles of Geology' by affirming that geological research finds in all directions the clearest indications of a *Creative Intelligence*, that as we increase our knowledge of the inexhaustible variety displayed in nature, and admire the infinite wisdom and power which it manifests, our admiration is multiplied by the reflection, that it is only the last of a great series of pre-existing creations, of which we cannot estimate the numbers or limit in times past.

The idea of a *Creative Intelligence and Mysterious Force* making living things behave in their various ways, each according to its kind, has occurred to more than one philosopher. Bernard Shaw calls it the *Life-Force* and *this Life-Force* was interpreted over a century ago by Scopenhaur as "*The World Will*" and as "*Idea and Will in Nature*." According to them Nature is no independent power, but it is the work of a Super-human *Something* existing as *It* wishes it to exist, reflecting *Its* mind and purpose and therefore trustworthy witness of *It*.

As in the only case where we know force directly, to wit, in the human constitution, we find it to be an attribute of will and intelligence, an energy and expression of spirit, we must infer in accordance with the general rule of science to interpret the unknown by the known, that force is everywhere else but an energy and expression of a Spirit, a Conscious Power or Will, a Creative Mind, an Infinite Intelligence. And of what other Spirit can it be than of the One Infinite and Almighty Personality whom the Rishis proclaimed as

Parābrahman, as *Paramatman*, as the *Self* and described and glorified Him in different ways according to their individual perceptions as shown below:—

“He from whom the universal world proceeds, who is the Lord of the Universe and whose work is the Universe, is the Supreme Being.” (*Taittiriya*).

“That from which all these beings are born, by which all created beings are sustained and into which (when departed from here) they proceed and enter, is the Supreme Being.” (*Taittiriya*).

“From His love surely have all these beings been born; by his love created beings are sustained and into His love they proceed and enter.” (*Taittiriya*).

“The Supreme Being is He from whom speech with mind comes back without finding. One who has known His love is not afraid of anything.” (*Taittiriya*).

“The Supreme Being is Sweetness indeed. The man or creature having obtained His sweetness becomes loving. Human speech naturally calls Him the Sweet. By enjoying His sweet love, man is immersed in supreme joy.” (*Taittiriya*).

“The Supreme Being is the Supreme Refuge of man. He is the Supreme Treasure of man. He is the Supreme Habitation of man. He is the Supreme Joy of man. All other beings live by participating in a measure of His Love.” (*Bṛihadaranyaka*).

“Who would move or who would live if the Supreme Being were not in the universe as Love? It is He indeed who inspires Love.” (*Taittiriya*).

“That which is Infinite is bliss. There is no happiness in the finite. The Infinite God alone is happiness.” (*Chandogya*).

“The Supreme Being was before all. He hath no feet but extendeth everywhere; He hath no hands, yet holdeth everything; He hath no eyes, yet seeth all that is; He hath no ears, yet heareth everything that passes; His existence hath no cause. He is the smallest of the small and the greatest of the great and yet is in fact neither small nor great.” (*Chandogya*).

“The Supreme Being is the God who is in fire, who is in water, who interpenetrateth the whole world, who is in herbs, who is in big trees. To Him we bow down again and again.” (*Svetasvatara*).

“Everywhere are His eyes, everywhere His face and head, everywhere His arms, everywhere His feet, everywhere His ears. He unites arms to the human body and wings to the body of birds. The

"The qualities of all the senses are manifested through Him. But He Himself is without any senses. He is the Lord of all, the King of all, the Stay of all and the Friend of all." (*Svetasvatara*).

"This Great Person is the Lord of all. This Infinite God who is the Light of knowledge has instituted righteousness for the sake of the supremely pure peace." (*Svetasvatara*).

"The Supreme Spirit, who is the nearest to all, is dearer than son, dearer than wealth, dearer than anything else." (*Brihadaranyaka*).

"The Supreme Spirit alone should be worshipped as the one. Whoever worships the Supreme Spirit alone as the dear object of love never perishes." (*Brihadaranyaka*).

"Our life attains its object, if we can know Him here and not know Him there, that is the greatest calamity; therefore, having realised Him as the One Supreme God in all things mortal or stationary, become immortal, when they depart from this world." (*Kena*).

"May that God, who though one and unseen, dispenses to all creatures their desired objects according to the varying needs of all by virtue of His manifold powers and in Whom the entire universe from the beginning to the end is established, give unto us the understanding!" (*Svetasvatara*).

"The sun does not shine there, nor the moon, the stars, nor lightnings. How shall the fire shine there? All shine after the Shining One. All this shines by His Light." (*Katha, Mundaka, Svetasvatara*).

"As birds take shelter in trees for rest, all the worlds rest in the Supreme Self." (*Prasna*).

"He, who existing in the earth, is yet different from the earth, whom the earth does not know, of whom the earth is the body, who rules the earth from within, is the Inner Ruler, the Immortal." (*Brihadaranyaka*).

"He, who existing in the individual self, is yet different from the individual self, whom the individual self does not know, of whom the individual self is the body, is the Inner Ruler, the Immortal." (*Brihadaranyaka*).

"As the one fire entering the world takes the form of each creature, so it burns, so He, the Inner-Self of all creatures, takes the form of each creature and is also beyond all objects." (*Katha*).

"As the one air entering the world, takes the form of each creature, so He, the Inner-Self of all creatures, takes the form of each creature and is also beyond all objects." (*Katha*).

"As the sun, the eye of the whole world, is not mixed up with the unholy external objects visible to the eye, so He, the Inner-Self of all creatures, is beyond all objects, is not mixed up with the sorrows of the world." (*Katha*).

"Just as by a single clod of clay, all that is made of clay becomes known, all modifications being only a name made of words, the reality being only clay; just as by a single nugget of gold, all that is made of gold becomes known, all modifications being only a name made of words, the reality being only gold; just as by a single pair of nail-cutters, all that is made of iron becomes known, all modifications being only a name made of words, the reality being only iron; so, the Supreme Being is the Inner-Self of all objects and creatures and is also beyond them all, all modifications being only a name made of words, the Reality being only Himself and which being known, all things are virtually known." (*Chandogya*).

"That which is not revealed by the speech, That by which the speech is revealed, That which people cannot conceive with the understanding, That by which the understanding is conceived, That which the people do not see with the eyes, That by whose power people see visible objects, That which people do not hear with their ears, That by which the ears are heard (known), That which people do not smell with the organ of smelling, That by which the power of smelling is led, is the Supreme Being, the Brahman." (*Kena*).

"That which is shining, smaller than an atom, in which rest the worlds and their inhabitants, is the Undecaying Brahman. He is the Life, the Speech and the Sensorium. He is the Truth, the Immortal." (*Mundaka*).

"He is the One Formless Being, with His purposes hidden, who with various purposes creates many forms, from whom the world rises in the beginning and to whom it returns in the end." (*Svetasvatara*).

"Therefore, he, who knows thus, becomes calm, subdued, free from desire, enduring, composed in mind and sees the Self in himself and all things as the Self. Sin does not subdue him. He subdues sin. Sin does not consume him; he consumes sin. He becomes free from sin, free from desire, free from doubt, a (real) Brahman, This is the world of Brahman." (*Brihadaranyaka*).

Let us now go back to the testimony of Science to the God-Vision of the Rishis. From what has been stated already, it follows that every fact which science can tell

the world, every law it can unravel, every force it can trace out, has some divine message for man. Every natural phenomenon, be it bacteria in sealed flasks or coloured bands in a spectrum, be it building power of molecule, mimicry of insects, natural selection among animals, has something to tell of God's thoughts and powers and methods of action. Nature then to the religious man constitutes God's Oldest Testament, His most direct Scripture and His most inspiring Revelation. The ideas disclosed in it are God's thoughts ; natural laws are divine laws which are the modes of the manifestations of the Divine Being, the enunciation of His wise designs. Natural history is a chapter of natural theology. The principles of philosophy are the expositions of His profound purposes. The researches of Science are the elucidations of His marvellous methods through age after age and in diverse departments. All Science is thus a revelation of the Omnipresent Worker. There is therefore no necessary and rightful antagonism, no real conflict or shadow of conflict between Science and Religion. Both proclaim, though in different voices, that the whole universe is the embodiment and manifestation of its Creator.

From the foregoing, we may conclude that our self-knowledge which is the true scientific foundation of all real knowledge, and which forms the basis of our knowledge of God, leads us to the fact that the non-existence of a Mighty, Righteous and Loving Being, such as postulated by the Rishis, is inconceivable and unthinkable, that all propositions implying denial or doubt of the existence of God—propositions which form the basal principles of scepticism and agnosticism, are self-contradictory. An analysis of our beliefs in the world and man and in a moral order of the universe, shows, that they all necessarily imply a firm persuasion in the truth of an Infinite and Perfect Being ; that every perception, every thought, every particle of knowledge, however acquired, even our doubts and misgivings, pre-

suppose the existence of an Infinite, All-comprehending Spirit which runs through all things and makes all things possible, of one Living God who loves us ; that we know Him and know Him directly ; that our apprehension of God is not of the nature of a mere belief—a belief which, however necessary and deep-rooted in the human soul, may or may not have a real object answering to it ; that our knowledge of the world is really His knowledge.

To our own varied faculties, therefore, God stands revealed as the Prime Reality, the soul and the All-Soul being in direct and sympathetic touch. To our own faculties, God is revealed as inseparably and indissolvably bound to the human soul like the mysterious yet natural linking of the eye to light, the ear to sound and the lung to air. To our own faculties—our common reason, our common conscience, our common emotion, our sense of cause, our moral sense and our sense of beauty—God is revealed as the fountain-source of power, wisdom, love and righteousness. Quicken the faculties of the scientist, he begins to reveal the methods of God. Rouse the faculties of the philosopher, he begins to discern the wisdom of God. Appeal to the faculties of the historian, he begins to prove the purposes of God. Touch the faculties of the poet, he begins to sing the beauty of God.

Our knowledge as human beings, being however limited, be we scientists, philosophers, historians or poets, our understanding of the nature and essence of the Supreme Being must necessarily be limited. Our idea of God may contain nothing which is not true of Him and may omit nothing which is essential for our spiritual welfare that we should know regarding Him. But it is impossible that it should be a complete and exhaustive idea of Him. We have scarcely a complete and exhaustive idea of anything and least of all can we have such an idea of the infinite and inexhaustible source of all being. God alone can have a complete and

exhaustive idea of Himself. There must be infinitely more in God than we have any idea of. There must be untold multitudes of qualities, powers, excellences in Divine nature which are wholly unknown to men or even wholly unknowable by them owing to their not possessing particular faculties for their apprehension. We, with our limited faculties, can apprehend certain attributes of God, but we can't comprehend or fully grasp or definitely image not one of them. If we could find out God unto perfection in any respect, then, either we must be infinite or God be finite in that respect. Though man is made in the image of God, he is not the measure of God.

Human intellect cannot, of course, fathom to the bottom the depths of the Supreme Being, as the inscription in the temple of Isis at Port Said testifies, "*I am that which has been, which is, which will be; and no man has yet lifted the veil that covers me.*" Man cannot comprehend all the mysteries of the Divine. But he can drop the plummet of thought deep enough to know whether that which he is dealing with is a Being with infinite power, wisdom, love and holiness as proclaimed by our Rishis. Though we cannot know all about Him, though we cannot know anything perhaps with absolute certainty, yet we can know something with a strong probability—probability equal to that with which men are satisfied in the realm of science. In other words, though we cannot know God in His infinite depths, yet we can realise Him in our human relations to him. These relations, however, are so complex, expansive, manifold, original, assuming different forms in each man's case, almost in each circumstance of each man, that they give us a fairly sufficient knowledge of God. In nature, in life, in soul, in humanity, in revelation, in history—secular and sacred, divine relations and dealings are unfolded and have to be discerned. Individually we know how God affects each soul, at what points He touches our consciousness, how He modifies it, moving

us to intense joy or to deep peace or to bitter remorse or to great longing for a higher holiness and how He gives us divine protection and inflowing moral strength.

Moreover, we are not left without practical tests of the truth of the declarations of the Rishis which serve our purpose. The chief of them is—"Does the belief in the particular truth work?" If a certain belief will not work in the actual work-a-day world, try it how we will, the presumption is that it is not true. Suppose a man says that the sea is solid. The test is, does the doctrine work? He steps down from the ship's side and sets his foot upon the wave. In a moment, he is submerged; and he has more conclusive evidence that the waters are not solid than he could have got by arguing the matter with a philosopher for a year and a day. Suppose a man says that the granite road is solid; every step he makes upon it day after day and year after year, more and more confirms his conviction. The doctrine works; and in the long run, that will be the surest ground of his belief. Similarly, as all the experience of life fits into the belief in the veracity of memory and the senses and the reality of the external world, reality only in relation to the Supreme Being, so also the experience of life fits into the belief in a God who is Power, Intelligence, Love and Righteousness. As the belief in the veracity of memory and the senses and in the reality of the external world works and never breaks down in the varied experiences of life, so the belief in a God who is Power, Intelligence, Love and Righteousness, works and never breaks down in the varied experiences of life. For, we see in actual life that the machine or organism, which we call a human being, is comparatively useless, feeble and inefficient, while it is without belief in God, but becomes useful, strong and efficient, when the love of God is in it; then that is an immeasurably strong argument for the reality of God and for the love of Him being founded in truth and not in illusion. We also see that

belief in God gives meaning and force and coherence to the language of life; whereas without it, it is a mere jumble of letters; then, that is a stupendously powerful reason for believing in God.

Furthermore, as we discern from the manner in which a house is built, the character of its builder, what sort of beauty he possesses, what wisdom characterises him in the peculiarities of the cosmic temple, we surely discern some of the attributes of the Great Architect. We find that it is God's mighty *Power* that held and whirled in His Hand the fiery fluid from which the present universe sprang; that it is God's *Wisdom* that has scattered unnumbered suns, planets and satellites into the infinite space and is still causing millions and millions of changes through millions of years. We find it is God's *Love* that has been creating, protecting and redeeming man and millions of living beings and has been leading them on through endless stages of progress; that it is God's *Justice* that has ordained and instituted a moral government in the universe.

Above all, religious experiences are so simple and direct that under certain conditions of mental awakening they give an exact universal response. They prove, as the Rishis say, not only that God is one but also that man's nature is one. That man's nature is one and nearly the same everywhere proves that the universal is in it and that God is the Spirit in all men. In the language of the Rishis, He is *bhutaantaryami* (the Inner Self of all living creatures). The seeking and seeing of such a God is most eminently natural and most wholesome to every man's heart. Otherwise, man would not survive the wreck of so many systems, as observed by Protap Chunder Muzamdar. Whatever ultimate mysteries there may be in the great depths of the Supreme, there is no expression that makes such a direct appeal to the restless instincts of our nature as that God is, the

is near, that He is in the heart, and that He is great and good, and we had better fly to Him as to our refuge and home.

From the facts marshalled out in this chapter, I am prompted to conclude that it is as impossible for men ready to doubt the existence of God as to doubt the outward world which they see and touch, and as impossible for them to be deaf to His Voice in conscience as to be deaf to the thunder-clap or the bugle-note, and as impossible for them to be insensible to the Love with which He penetrates them as to be insensible to the light that floods the day.

Verily, as the Rishis say, we spring out of Him ; we grow in Him ; we breathe in Him ; and we are resumed in Him. In the very conception of our being, He is implied. In the growth and development of life, in the unfolding and out-flowering of the soul, in the quest and accomplishment of human destiny, He is the Eternal Preserver, Fulfiller and In-gatherer. He is the free giver of all good things, the bountiful bestower of all boons, the ready fulfiller of all desires, the prompt response to all prayers. Our debt of immense and endless gratitude how can we describe in human language, compute in human expression ?

CHAPTER VII.

THE RISHIS' CONCEPTION OF THE CREATION OF THE UNIVERSE AND THE MODERN SCIENTIFIC THEORY THEREOF.

The Rig-Veda in the tenth Mandala makes the following declaration which forms the genesis of the Upanishadic conception of creation :—

“ In the beginning there was neither naught nor aught,
Then there was neither sky nor atmosphere above,
What enshrouded the universe ?
In the receptacle of what was it contained ?
Was it enveloped in gulf profound of water ?
Then was there neither death nor immortality,

Then was there neither day nor night nor light nor darkness
 Only the existent One breathed calmly, self-contained.
 Naught else than him there was,—naught else above, beyond.
 Then first came darkness hid in darkness, gloom in gloom.
 Next all was water, all a chaos indiscreet,
 In which the One lay void shrouded in nothingness.
 Then, turning inwards, he by self-developed force grew.
 And in him desire, the primal germ of mind,
 Arose, which learned men, profoundly searching, say
 Is the subtle bond connecting entity
 With nullity. This ray that kindled dormant life,
 Where was it then? before? or was it above?
 Were there parturient powers and latent qualities
 And fecund principles beneath, and active forces
 That energized aloft? Who knows? Who can declare
 How and from what has sprung the universe? The gods
 Themselves are subsequent to its development.
 Who, then, penetrates the secret of its rise? "

According to the Rishis also, this beautiful universe has not been existent always. Time there was without a trace of it; it was so to speak a void enveloped in darkness. O that darkness, the Supreme Being, the Eternal Entity without a second, was the Light. In the language of the Rishis

"The Real alone existed before creation as the One Supreme God without a second. He meditated and having meditated created all this that exists. From Him were born life, mind, all the senses, the heavens, the air, the light, the water and the earth that contains all. As a spider gives out and takes in its thread or as plants grow on the earth, or as hairs come out from a living person, so do all senses, all worlds, all devas, all beings come forth from that Self, the Undecaying One Brahman became enlarged (i.e., ready to create the world) through meditation. From it was produced food (i.e., primal matter.) From matter came Prana, the sensorium, truth, the five elements, the worlds and in the worlds the imperishable fruit. From Him, who is all-knowing and all-perceiving, whose penance consists in knowledge, were produced this lower Brahman, name, form and primal matter. As sparks, similar to fire, come out of a blazing fire by thousands, various creatures come out of the Undecaying One and also return to it. (Brihadaranyaka, Taittiriya and Mundaka).

The Sat, the Supreme Being, who in the beginning abided in His own undifferented unity, decided to "become many and grow forth" (Chandogya) and accordingly mused in Himself the scheme of the cosmos and with His contemplation, has projected into being all that is. By and from His Will-Power everything came into existence. Thus, according to the Rishis, the Supreme Being is both the efficient and the material cause of the Universe. The proximate explanation of creation therefore lies in the "*impelling will-force, inner fervour, intense abstraction and desire, the primal germ, the subtle bond that connects entity with nullity.*"

The Sat is the vast image of the Supreme Purusha (Person) described in the Rig Veda, whose "one footstep are the heavens", from "whose mind is the moon," from "whose eye the sun", from "whose interior are the skies and from whose head the heavens, from His mouth the Brahman, from His arms is the Kshatria, from His feet the Sudra". In the same strain the Mundaka Upanishad describes the immanence of God in the universe, when it says: "*Heaven is His head, the sun and the moon are His eyes, the quarters His ears, the uttered Vedas His speech, air is His breath and the world His heart. Out of His two feet has come out the earth. This Person is the Inner Self of all creatures.*" Thus the Supreme Being is the Source and Substance, Soul and Life and Form of creation. But the process of His manifestation, we do not know. It is mysterious. The Rishis say that, by an act of sacrifice, the Supreme Being imposes on Himself what is called self-limitation and the manifested universe is but the outcome of this self-limitation.

And in this mysterious process of the Spirit's Self-unfolding we find that gradual growth and not primal maturity is stamped on all objects subject to time and space. Slow developments and not miraculous spasms of creative power are universal. Not by an arbitrary fiat of will, not by a

paroxysm of energy, but by orderly, unending growth, by the graduated operations of the law of evolution which must have started trillions and trillions of years ago and which involved and involves a long series of processes by which successive stages of development have been reached from the simple to the more complex, does the Supreme Being convert Himself into this wonderful, variegated world of sentient and insentient objects.

From him was first born the inorganic universe, not "*the illusory, imaginary, unreal*", but the solid, substantial, real universe—a universe of stupendous scene of intelligible relations, wonderful adaptations and adjustments, in which each object in space and each event in time could be understood only in the light of the whole of which it forms a part—a universe of space peopled by millions and millions of heavenly bodies—countless systems profusely scattered at enormous distances over an immense void and so arranged and distributed in relation to one another and in accordance with the requirements of the profoundest mathematics as to secure the safety of one and all; glorious galaxies of suns, planets, satellites, comets—quietly, submissively, though mechanically yet majestically, moving and rushing in marvellous harmony and with unerring precision, without clash or conflict, in their appointed orbits, to the march of celestial music, in strict obedience to the hidden system of eternal laws implanted in them.

From Him was next born the whole organic nature which shines in His Divine radiance with all the charm and beauty of the vegetable kingdom and acts in conformity with His ordinances. From Him next came the denizens of the animal kingdom from the tiniest worm to the towering elephant endowed with consciousness. All these act instinctively in harmony with His laws,—laws exhibiting a unity which is characterised by an admirable correlation of structure to environment and of organ to function, by the

mutual inter-dependence of animal and vegetable life and continuous self-adjustments of part to part and change to change and above all by the ingenious contrivances which minister to the prospective harmony of nature.

We thus see that in the process of God's evolution, all inorganic nature is a pathway of forces working towards the consummation of that which we call life. The rocks, the seas, the atmosphere are the prior requisites which make possible the sea-weed, the green herbage, the great forests, the fragrant flowers, the precious fruit. These in themselves are ends; but they are also means. For without them, the air could be filled with no buzzing and twittering life, the surface of our globe could give no support to beasts and creeping things, the sea would be empty of the vast shoals that crowd its depths. The plants furnish the great laboratory which prepares the food for these. "Only," says Dr. Martineau, a modern western sage, "that unlike our chemist's apparatus and processes their experiments are all silent, their alembics all sweet, their products the grace and beauty of the world, and their very refuse a glow of autumn glory." And all this conscious life, itself an end, is, in turn, in a thousand ways, means towards human life. And within the scope of this human life, the appetites, the affections, the sentiments, in ascending scale, step after step, lead up to the final realisation of the ideal of the conscience.

Marvellous, miraculous, is the conception, birth and growth of human life—once perceptible only as a mere dot of protoplasmic substance, but through direct action and intimate watch moving mysteriously into outer growth and inner development, till the world views with amazement that it should have come out in the wondrous form of a self-conscious individual and with infinite possibilities! How ceaselessly, how abundantly, **God's Creative Love** is in evidence—every desire and prompting anticipated and provided for; the milk preceding the child, the sun-shine

awaiting the eye, the breeze in readiness to refresh the body and all the affinities and associations with the entire environment brought into immediate touch and relationship and made to subserve the designs and dictates of His Providence !

Not only is God's own love thus evident in the shaping and unfolding of the human life, but He has also planted it in the heart of man. For, our mutual dependence is accompanied in various degrees by sentiments of affection which cast quite a new light on the world, and give to life a quite new significance. God might so have made the world that all the functions of mankind should have been discharged absolutely without the kindling of this affection, by compulsion of instinct or necessity as in the case of animals. But God *has* so made the world that all mutual service and interdependence of human beings tends to evolve the aroma of friendship and affection, of touch of heart with heart, and so to suffuse life with a beauty nothing else could give.

Suppose for a moment that God actually had made the world of mankind without this mystery of love. Suppose each man and woman isolated in the daily task, beholding the faces, hearing the voices of others, but with never the light of mutual kindness in the eye, never the thrill of friendship in the voice. Imagine all that range of motive which springs from our affections for each other cut off in our daily life. What a dreariness and weariness life would be ! And yet God might so have built up the world. He might have implanted in us all the necessary instincts to carry the world along without ever a thrill of affection in any human heart. He has not done so. He has given us friendship, sympathy, affection, love. Hence it is that the Rishis have stated that "*we not only come into life in love but continue to live in love and are finally resumed into love.*"

Let us see what Science has to say about the story of the Universe. It tells us that in the beginning, that is, before

there was any organised universe at all, a thin semi-gaseous and semi-liquid substance existing evenly diffused throughout space, gradually thickens at certain centres. This thickening is, it says, the first step in the starting of evolution. Who or what caused the thickening, Science has no answer to it. But matter, we know, has no spontaneity of action, as already stated in Chapter VI *supra*. The essential idea of matter is that it is inert, remains in its present condition for ever, unless disturbed by some external agency. As the only spontaneous agent we know of is the self-conscious free-will, the Will of a Supreme Being must be regarded as the force that has brought about the first thickening of the centres.

The aforesaid thickening, says science, produces a marvellous rotatory motion. The rotatory motion, in its turn, transforms the centres each into a globe, which revolves on its axis with immense velocity and prodigious heat. These globes are the suns, the innumerable galaxies of stars which lit up the sky radiating light and heat, and of which our sun is one. This rotatory motion next leads on to smaller masses being flung off from each central sun and these, though first forming rings like the present ring of Saturn, gradually also become globular with motion round their own axis, as well as motion round the central sun. These are the planets of which our earth is one. These planets again in many cases flung off further films which formed into moons having a treble motion, rotation round their own axis, motion round their parent planets and with their planets motion round the central sun. Of these our moon is one.

Thus the first great stage running through millions and millions of years shows the primitive world-stuff gradually parcelled out into stars and systems, moving with perfect orderliness through the universe. And in each system, the various members settle down to their ordered orbits in circulation around the central sun. Even the wayward

comets are caught into this system or that and compel to move through a settled orbit as obediently as the most respectable planet of them all. Besides, every sun revolves on its own axis and is moving through space accompanied by its family of planets, just as our own sun is moving towards the constellation Hercules. And so to the humble spectator, ever since he began to reflect on the marvels of the nightly skies, the heavens have always been the visible symbol and type of order, of harmony, of the poise of man in interdependence, each upon all and all upon each.

Next comes the cooling of the afore-mentioned sun-bodies by radiation of their heat into space by degrees which has brought, is bringing and will bring each for a period to a temperate heat, such as that now enjoyed by our earth. Thus after many an aeon, those elements which the earliest science of man enumerated—fire, air, earth and water, appear on the scene of our globe. Then the formation of mountains and soil and slime.

Then comes the most important stage in evolution. Science sees atoms of inorganic matter shifting into strange and marvellous combinations as at last to constitute that mysterious protoplasm, the physical basis of life, an absolute new beginning in the process of evolution. Why just this combination of atoms should suddenly put on that entire new set of characteristics which we call *life*, science can find no sort or kind of guess. There is a great chasm between inorganic or non-living and organic or living matter which no bridge of scientific thought can span. No Newton can ever make intelligible according to mechanical causes the germination of a single blade of grass. The scientific investigator, meeting at every step of his progress this strange apparition of life, cannot account for how, whence or what it is and is awed and bewildered. Life is a mystery and will ever remain a mystery to the mere mechanist, to him who endeavours to root out all notions of design or intelligence in the operation

of nature. In other words, science confesses the fact of life to be inexplicable. Professor Lionel Beale says :—

“There is mystery in life,—a mystery that has never been fathomed, and which appears greater the more deeply the phenomena of life are studied and contemplated. In living centres,—far more central than centres seen by the highest magnifying powers—in centres of living matter, where the eye cannot penetrate, but towards which the understanding may tend, proceed changes of the nature of which the most advanced physicists and chemists fail to afford us the conception. Nor is there the slightest reason to think that the nature of these changes will ever be ascertained by physical investigation, inasmuch as they are certainly of an order totally distinct from that to which any other phenomena known to us can be relegated.

“Between the living state of matter and its non-living state there is an absolute and irreconcilable difference; that, so far from our being able to demonstrate that the non-living passes by gradations into or gradually assumes the state or condition of the living, the transition is sudden and abrupt; and that matter already in the living state may pass into the non-living condition in the same sudden and complete manner. The formation of bioplasm direct from non-living matter is impossible even in thought; except to one who sets absolutely at naught the facts of physics and chemistry.”

Dr. Annie Besant thus reasons :—

“If from the blind clash of atoms and the hurling forces there comes no explanation of Life and of Mind, if these remain *sui generis*, if they loom larger and larger as causes rather than as effects, who shall blame the searcher after Truth, when, failing to find how Life can spring from force and matter, he seeks whether Life be not itself the Centre, and whether every form of matter may not be the garment wherewith veils itself an Eternal and Universal Life?”

Onward in the march of evolution, the aforesaid life-giving protoplasmic matter, mysteriously goes on building itself up into more and more highly organised forms in the vegetable kingdom, from the simplest sea-weed to the mighty royal oak, till at last it becomes the seat of *consciousness*, a still more inexplicable and unprecedented phenomenon. This consciousness-sustaining-life-substance, says Science, next branches out and pushes along the line of progression

till all the varieties of the animal kingdom are formed—from the simplest skin-bag in the ocean slime—through the mollusca, the crustacea and the vertebrates, upto the regal man himself—by far the most mysterious product of evolution, the crown and glory of creation, who is conscious of his selfhood, of his distinction from all the universe around him and who is of a self-determining, self-estimating and self-directing will and self-contained capacity of thought, saying to himself “*I am I*”.

Now, some philosophers, trying to get rid of the Will-Power in the Universe on which the Rishis of the Upanishads have laid so much stress, tell us that the laws of motion impressed on all the molecules of matter as part of their very nature at the beginning of all things could not but work out as they have worked out. They say that they can prove this of the simpler motions at the beginning, and that it is only reasonable to believe that it is so right on to the end. “Give us”, say they, “those *thickenings* at certain centres of the primeval, universal, glowing world-stuff and we can show that the rotation and the sun-making and the planet-making and the moon-making must follow by the primary laws of motion, and so the Universe, even as it is, could not help being evolved, if only you give it time. Suppose that unconscious matter is itself endowed with certain energies and forces which act automatically without the presence of will. Supposing all this is granted, who or what brought about the thickening of the primeval glowing world-stuff? How did the evenness turn to unevenness? We must have some power there to start the evolution. Evenly spread fluid that had been lying evenly spread from all eternity—even supposing it had existed from all eternity, and had never been created,—could not by sudden spasm gather into knots and nuclei unless some power other than itself were applied to it. Push God back and back, if you will, but at the outset, for the first start of the stu-

pendous evolution, we must have divine volition or our even fluid will remain even and unorganised for ever and ever. Divine volition is therefore the first requisite in the process of evolution as held by our Rishis—Rig-Vedic and Upanishadic.

And there are at least two more *hitches* or *hurdles*. No science can, as we have seen already, explain the evolution of organic from inorganic matter. Life as stated above, is an absolutely new beginning. Who or what gave the magic touch to the first lump of protoplasm made of the ancient elements of carbon, nitrogen, hydrogen and oxygen, so that of a sudden its particles began that quite new kind of shifting and renewal from surrounding matter which we call *life*? Most certain it is that whatever else we make or unmake, life is not, cannot be our own making. We cannot keep it. Its growth does not depend upon our will. Its changes are unconscious, involuntary. How nature swarms with life! How the earth teems with life! The seed of life—the principle or spirit of life, appears to be everywhere. The transparent air is filled with beings which the microscope renders visible. And finally, after this vegetable life had become common on the earth, by what possible process did it suddenly become the seat of that quite new and unprecedented thing which we call '*consciousness*'? This too was a sheer and clean new beginning and no possible or imaginable laws of motion or of matter can as much as begin to account for it. Stamp matter, then, with what endowments we will, there are at least these three points where we can by no possibility get rid of the Divine Will-Force—the beginning of the whole evolution (if there was a beginning), the beginning of life and the beginning of consciousness.

There are indeed certain deep and ingenious speculations which strive to smooth away these '*hitches*' by supposing that both life and consciousness have been in some dim way

inherent in the universe from all time, and that the building up of the vegetable and animal kingdoms is but the development and specialisation of the vague life-power which lies in all things and that this new world of consciousness in bird and beast, and in man himself, is but the brighter blaze in higher organisms of the dim consciousness which stirs even in the humblest atom of inorganic matter. But even if we were to allow this somewhat strained speculation, and so to get life and consciousness out of the universe at the end by putting it in at the beginning, we should still have to recognise what is called a '*hitch*,' the necessity, that is, of the application of some power other than and above the inherent properties of the universe, in the first rise of *self-consciousness*, the appearance of one who is a *person* consciously distinct from all the universe around. And this sense of being a separate self, a person distinct in consciousness from all other being or beings whatsoever, is the assurance and conviction that lies deepest, clearest, and most secure in the heart of every one of us:

It is absurd to say that the mere inherent laws of motion or of matter produced this universe. No sane man can steadily contemplate the whole course of evolution which has led up to the existence of civilized nations of men without feeling that this is no chance or accidental result, but reveals steady *purpose* ruling and shaping from the beginning to the end.

Nature seems always to be working on from climax to climax, each in its turn the goal in some long road, yet each goal reached pointing to the path towards other goals beyond; but always with increasing variety, increasing interdependence and harmony also, animal dependent on vegetable, vegetable on animal, the grasses feeding the flocks, the insect fertilising the flower, man dependent on the trees of the wood and the flocks and herds, the flocks and herds themselves dependent on man;—and now in

historic times men themselves becoming ever more and more dependent on each other,—the artisan dependent on the husbandman, the husbandman on the artisan ; the artist supplying the highest pleasures of the man of affairs, the man of business supplying the necessities of the artist ; the wheat-growing countries feeding the coal-producing countries, the coal and iron nations creating all the implements of civilization for the populations of the grain lands. So that the progress of that little bit of the universe, the earth, which is intimately known to us, turns out to consist in the ever-increasing complexity of its elements, and the even more and more intricate and beautiful interdependence of those elements, the ever growing variety of their ministry of service, one to the other. So that it looks as if the Great Power lying at the back of all and over-ruling all, which we call God and the Rishis called Brahman found divine delight in this universality of dependence and service between all the individual atoms or beings of the world which He has created.

By no manner of means could the philosophers, above referred to, explain how the universe came to be a universe—a single, magnificent, complicated system, characterised by a marvellous unity in variety. Certainly the atoms could not, as humourously observed by Dr. Flint, have taken counsel together and devise a common plan and work it out. Granting for argument's sake all the atoms of matter to be eternal, granting that all the properties and forces which are claimed for them to be eternal and immutable, it is still beyond all expression improbable that these atoms with these forces, if unarranged, uncombined, ununified, unutilised by a presiding Mind, would give rise to anything entitled to be called a universe. It is millions to one that they would never produce the simplest of the regular arrangements which we comprehend under the designation of course of nature, or the lowest of vegetable or animal organisms ; millions

of millions to one that they would never produce a solar system, the earth, the vegetable or animal kingdom or human history. No number of material atoms, although eternal and endowed with mechanical forces can explain the unity and order of the Universe and therefore the supposition of their eternal existence does not free us from the necessity of believing in a single intelligent cause—a Supreme Mind—to move and mould, combine and adjust the ultimate atoms of matter into a single, orderly, homogeneous system. He has again the progress of science has not more convincingly and completely disproved the once prevalent notion that the universe was created about six thousand years ago than, has convincingly and completely established that the *hitches* or *hurdles* mentioned above and various transformations and activities involved in the process of the evolution of the universe, can be solved, as stated in Chap. VI *Supra*, only by the recognition of a Creative Intelligence, a Designing and Directing Power, an Invisible Spirit permeating, encompassing, controlling the entire line of evolution around the entire circle of cosmic activity—an informing, vivifying, evolving Cause behind the countless manifestations in the different departments of nature, as postulated by our ancient Rishis.

In passing, I may state that physical science has also established that what we call matter is essentially force and nothing but force, that the whole material world is ultimately resolvable into forces ; that all its forces are but manifestation or outgoings of One Will-Force. If so, the whole material world is not only dependent on but is the *Will* of One Supreme Mind. This *Will* is not only the cause and controlling power of nature but its substance also. Every atom, every molecule is not therefore self-existent, but must in what is ultimate in it, bear the impress of a supernatural power and wisdom and reflect the glory of a Supreme Being and proclaim its dependence on Him. According to the Rishis also, the great secret, the final mystery of the Universe is

that the substance of all is one and that substance is not matter but God's great and glorious Spirit.

From the above digression, we shall revert to the history of the evolution of human life and trace the further ascent of man in the process of God's creation. Measured by physical size, man is all too puny as against those gigantic orbs that people the limitless space. But judged by the powers that are deposited in his bosom, man is the very crown of creation. Infinity is enshrined in every human soul. God does truly regenerate, reproduce, recreate Himself in every human spirit. How wonderful are the powers that He has treasured in each soul—not merely to take the measurements of time and space, but so to scale the heights and sound the depths of time and so to probe into the very centre and gauge the whole circuit of space, as to surpass and outreach time and space! Unto man is granted, even because he is truly and verily His child, the power to look ahead and afar, about and around, above and below and to gather up the entire picture of the universe into his understanding mind and the entire procession of life into his embracing heart, all the solemnities and sanctities of the spirit into his divinely indwelt soul. Wonderful is this, the offspring of God, known and honoured, cherished and exalted as man—the possessor of that mystic eye which can pry into the sealed secrets of creation! What the rest of God's creation accepts and obeys as law, he spells out and embraces as rule of life. Above all, this marvellous human atom, looking forth from his petty pellet of planetary matter, has measured and weighed the gigantic celestial bodies, traced their orbits through the heavens, divined the processes by which they grew from dusty nebulae into glowing sun or life-blessed planet; he has tracked the subtle *Proteus* (Force) from form to form and made it now fly with his messages, and then drag him in to spin and knit, to sow and reap for him, to carry him from corner to corner of the globe

with inconceivable speed. Starting as a speck, then a cell, a germ, *growing* as a miracle, then a self-unfolding a finished figure, a hope incarnate, *developing* as a *parang*ing forth into infinite space on the wings of God's creation, this wonderful being, known as man, has been minute a living proof of God's divine glory.

The process of God's evolution does not stop with the production of the merely self-conscious and free-willed God's creative and controlling Power, His ceaseless Energy goes on, *from the first thickening of the primeval world-stuff*, expanding step by step, thrill by thrill, vibration by vibration, movement by movement till it manifests in the God-like being of the poet and the prophet, the martyr, the philosopher and the sage, the theopist and the patriot. This steady progress, stage by stage, through means after means, on and ever on to a noble end, so wondrous in its adjustments and transitions, is the mark, not of the accidental clash of purposeless mindless atoms, not of mere chance or dead matter or force, but of His conscious self-determining Will which weaves the end from the beginning and weaves the ages as upon the loom, evolving successively matter out of formlessness, the pleasure garden of an earth out of a blazing hell, life out of the lifeless, animal out of the vegetable, humanity out of animalism, and divinity out of humanity. The truth borne in upon us quite irresistibly that in the process of evolution under the stress of His Living Energy, there has been guiding design from first till now—an increasing process running through the ages.

Oh, the glory and the beauty of God's creation! Two living creatures are ever exactly alike. Twins are mistaken to be alike only through the superficial nature of observation. For, each one has a distinct mark in its deportment, in voice, in gesture. His gracious attention is always individual, attention focussed on the un-

merely spread over the type. Likewise, no two souls are quite alike, each one rounded out in the fulness of its individuality. Else, God's very capacity to create worlds will look exhausted. But wonderful is the Divine Mother's fecundity and infinite variety within the bounds of general uniformity!

Besides, God's workmanship differs from that of man in this—that, while the latter makes an effect in its outlines and its general mass, God's is infinitely beautiful, the deeper we go, in the endless littleness of its atoms. The leg of His fly is more wonderful than Cleopatra's Needle.

How unfailing are God's designs and purposes, how sure are His ways and methods! From eternity to eternity, He has mapped out, as if in one pin-point, the plan, the purpose, the design, the destiny of the universe. Behold the world! Oh, the praise and glory of it! It goes on with the certainty of a mechanism and the regularity of a clock, so that purblind as we are, we miss Him and fall into the illusion that He is not there and pursue our own evil propensities, reducing ourselves to the level of the objects and creatures of the vegetable and animal kingdoms. But He is there pervading all, weaving Himself into all, threading His way into all, intently glowing and throbbing through all.

While the inorganic heavenly bodies, the vegetable kingdom and the sentient beings of the lower order of the organic world follow unswervingly the will and ordinances of God implanted in them, we, human beings, however, find, to our great dismay, that as the result of the freedom of will which has been endowed on humanity, only a few resignedly attune themselves to His Divine Will, accepting His laws and adopting them knowingly, willingly and cheerfully through their voluntary affiliation and self-determined subordination to His ways; while others, by far the largest number, slavishly follow their own self-seeking will and animal propensities. Thus God's peaceful earth is converted,

as it were, into a composite world, a world of i-
 contraries—a world of knowledge and ignorance, of
 sorrow, of love and hatred, of holiness and sin; of
 happiness and misery, of pleasure and pain, of ho-
 dishonour, of health and disease; a world of hop-
 appointment, of forgiveness and revenge, of divin-
 and lustful promptings, of broad-based philanth-
 self-centered avarice; a world of discordant faiths, of
 crushing customs, social tyrannies, unmerited pers-
 a world of warring elements, clashing interests,
 conflicting ideals. This mixed world is the Lord's own *Viswarupam*, designed as the cradle and training g-
 the evolution of spirituality and divinity out of a
 and humanity, for drawing out our highest good and
 virtues for the salvation of our souls, since He has
 unto every man the blessedness of infinite growth
 expansion in Him.

In His mercy, however, He discloses to ador-
 how with all its multifarious contents, its confl-
 cts, differences and diversities, this universe is a
 nic, articulated system, its various parts related
 another as means and ends, a harmonised cosmos,
 orb revolving along its orbit within the ambit
 Divine Self-Manifestation, following the path prescri-
 the One Providential God, fulfilling the destiny des-
 the One All-Wise God and reflecting the glory of
 Ever-Effulgent God. And in this myriad-faced s-
 festation of His, we are all one in spirit and su-
 in destiny and harmony.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE RISHIS' CONCEPTION OF GOD AS ABSOLUTELY UNDIFFERENCED BRAHMAN : THE DOCTRINE OF VISHUDDHA ADVAITAVADA OR UNQUALIFIED MONISM.

It will be seen from the foregoing chapter how marvellous, what a deep mystery is God's creation, the evolution of the finite from the Infinite. He, the One Infinite, the Eternal, the Universal, the Great Original, converting Himself into material manifestations and modifications ! How does He, the Supreme Spirit, who is self-manifest and eternally revealed to Himself, manifest Himself as the life of the individual in the stream of time ? Is this not a mystery ? How does He, who is Eternal, manifest Himself as the changing world and the changing life of the individual, remaining eternal all the same ? Is this not a mystery ? How does He, who is All-knowing and Infinite, appear as ignorant and finite in the life of the individual, remaining All-knowing and Infinite all the same ? There is no doubt that He does so and it is also true that an Eternal and Infinite and All-knowing unrelated to the changing and finite and ignorant is meaningless.

Nevertheless, the Eternal becoming changeful and at the same time remaining Eternal, the All-knowing becoming ignorant and at the same time remaining All-knowing, the Infinite becoming finite and at the same time remaining Infinite ; all this seems to involve a contradiction. This apparent contradiction is the mystery of creation. It is their inability to solve this mystery that seems to have induced a few Rishis, perhaps much against their logical conviction, to set down creation itself as unreal and merely apparent, notwithstanding their realistic descriptions thereof in their teachings, thus unwittingly laying the seeds of the later theory of *Maya* or *Illusion*, so fully developed by Sri

Sankara in his *Vishuddha Advaitavada*, the doctrine of Unqualified Monism, of the unity of God and man and the world *without* difference. On the other hand, by a large number of Rishis believed creation to be real. In later times formed the basis of what is known as Sri Ramanuja's *Vishista Advaitavada*, the doctrine of Qualified Monism of the Unity of God and man and the world *in* difference.

Both the schools profess the Advaita or monistic doctrine, namely that God alone is the Ultimate Reality and that He is the One without a second (*Ekameva advaita*). Both believe in the pervasiveness and universality of God-Head. To both the schools, Nature is not any thing apart from God. Both the systems say that man, mind, spirit, is not distinct or apart from God, but is in an essential relation to Him. Brahman, according to Sankara, has no internal differences; He is pure Unity without difference. But according to Ramanuja, Brahman has internal differences, matter and finite minds being particular modifications of His existence,—not apart, but distinguishable, from the absolute nature. Hence Sankara's Advaita or Monism is called *Visuddha* or *Nirvisesha*, Unqualified, and Ramanuja's *Vishista*, Qualified. The theories of creation held by the two schools follow directly from the nature of their Monism. Laying emphasis on the pure unity and non-duality of God and man without internal difference, Sankara denies reality of creation *i.e.*, of the phenomenal world and the individual self, considers them as imaginary and illusory; while Ramanuja asserts these two as real, relatively to Brahman, but not absolutely. The doctrine of *moksha* or liberation by the two schools follows directly from their views on creation and its relation to the Creator. According to Sankara, what really takes place in liberation is that the false and the false world are merged in the Absolute. On the other hand, the world and finite souls having a real though dependent place in God according to Ramanuja, liberation

him is not our merging in God, but the finite soul's realisation of its true relation, and that of the world, to the Infinite. While to Sankara, the finite as such, has no existence, either real or apparent, after liberation; to Ramanuja, the finite soul, freed from its bonds of ignorance and sin, continues to live an endless life in God in a society of liberated souls.

Ramanuja insists on the Supreme fact of Divine Personality, a Living, Loving and Righteous Person who gives the protecting, all-sufficing sense of guardianship of an encompassing personal presence, which alone makes practical and personal religion at all possible. Individual relations with the Paramatma are not only acknowledged but laid down and classified in detail. The alienation of the soul through sin and ignorance is also described. The moral responsibilities of man are not forgotten. The incarnation of the Divine Spirit is looked upon as the very first principle of all true religion. The love of God becomes a perfect self-immersion, a perfect inebriation. God is regarded as the Friend, the Parent, the Child, the Husband, the Master.

Having given a very general idea of the two schools, I shall deal with them as briefly as possible in this and the next chapter to enable the reader to follow more closely the relevant portions of the texts of the Upanishads in Part II of this Manual and draw his own inferences as regards the truths propounded by their respective advocates.

Among the Upanishadic Rishis, it was Uddalake Aruni who gave the first regular exposition of *Unqualified Monism*, also called Monistic Absolutism, the unity of all existence, with such illustrations and arguments as commended themselves to his hearers in that dawn of philosophical thought in which he lived. His teachings are found at length in the sixth chapter of the *Chandogya Upanishad*. The ablest exponent of this philosophy, however, is unquestionably Yajnavalkya, Aruni's disciple, who excelled his master in

fulness and clearness of exposition. His teaching is a greater part of the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*.

Imparting instruction on *Brahmajñanam* to Svetaketu, Aruni says "My dear, as by one clod all that is made of clay is known, the difference being only a name arising from speech, but the truth being that all is clay; and as, my dear, by one nugget of gold, all that is made of gold is known, the difference being only a name arising from speech, but the truth being that all is gold; and as, my dear, by one pair of nail scissors, all that is made of iron is known, the difference being only a name arising from speech, but the truth being that all is iron, thus, is that instruction."

The sum and substance of Aruni's teaching is that existence springs from and is established in an unseparated Reality which again is identified with the human soul and that Reality is not only the efficient but also the material cause of the world, the substance of which the things of the world take various forms or appearances. The teaching is famous for its position of the great saying (*mahāvākya*) "*Thou art Brahman*" i.e., man's true relation to the Highest Self.

The Reality of which all things are mere modifications and which being known all things are virtually known is Aruni the *Self*, the same self that every one of us knows in his own. Thus all things are the Self, one indivisible Reality, there is no not-self. The Rishi further declares that at the beginning, i.e., before creation, there existed only the One Being—not a mere substance but a Subject, a Person. He thought "I am one, let me become many; let me grow into many." Accordingly, He first sent forth *tejas*, then *ap*, then *prithvi*, corresponding to fire, water and earth. The First *Sât*, further thought. "Let me *enter* into these forms, let me manifest myself as individual selves and manifest names and forms." By this entry, the self living in the human body takes two forms, individual and Universal, the former

to sleep, the latter ever-waking. When the individual self sleeps, he is then united to the *Sat*. He then attains his own true or ultimate form. All these living beings, when they reach the *Sat* in dreamless sleep, do not know they have reached the *Sat*. The Rishi then goes on explaining in various ways that this *Sat* is underlying all existence as the root not only of all the objective but likewise of our own subjective existence. Having thus *discovered* the Universal Self which comprehends all finite selves and beings and which is both the efficient and material cause of the Universe, as already stated above, Aruna says to his son : "*Now that which is that subtle essence, in it all that exists has its self. It is the True. It is the Self, and thou, O Swetaketu, art that.*"

The sections of Chapter VI containing this teaching are unique in the whole of the Upanishadic literature alike for boldness of speculation and grandeur of expression. The great unseen Reality is identified with the human soul. The conversation between the father and the son is marvellous for depth of thought and dramatic exposition. The deepest curiosity of the son has been roused by the astonishing revelation of the father, and Swetaketu prays to be enlightened more and more on the subject, and the father in an unfaltering voice goes on declaring, "*Thou art that*" and explaining the *Sat* in its subjective and objective aspects. And the various questions supposed to have been put to the father by the son to which answers were given by the former in sections ix to xvi of the chapter evidencing Aruni's profound philosophical insight have been summarised by Sankara as follows :—

(1) All creatures falling every day into deep sleep (*sushupti*) obtain thereby the *Sat*, the True Being. How is it then that they do not know that they obtain the *Sat* everyday?

(2) If a man who has slept in his own house rises and goes to another village, he knows that he has come from his own house. Why then do people not know that they have come from the *Sat*?

(3) Waves, foam and bubbles arise from the water and when they merge again in the water, they are gone. How is it that living beings when in sleep or death they are merged again in the *Sat*, are not destroyed?

(4) How can this universe which has the form and name of earth, etc., be produced from the *Sat* which is subtle and has neither form nor name?

(5) If the *Sat* is the root of all that exists, why is it not perceived?

(6) The salt, though no longer perceptible by means of sight or touch, could be discovered by taste. Then how can the *Sat* be discovered, although it is imperceptible by all the senses?

(7) By what degrees a man, who has been properly instructed in the knowledge of Brahman, obtains the *Sat* or returns to the True?

(8) Why does he who knows on obtaining the *Sat*, not return, while he who does not know though obtaining the *Sat* in death, returns?

Aruni's conception of death is "When, my dear, a man dies, his speech merges in mind, mind in life, life in *tejas* and *tejas* in the Highest Deity, i.e., *Sat*. Again, the relatives of a sick man assemble round him and ask, "Do you know me? Do you know me?" He knows them as long as speech is not merged in mind, mind in life, life in *tejas* and *tejas* in the Highest Deity. But when speech is merged in mind, mind in life, life in *tejas* and *tejas* in the highest Deity, then he knows them not". That is to say, in the Highest Deity, there is no differentiation, no knowledge of particulars. Particulars are merged in the Universal; the many lose themselves in the One. They have no real and permanent place in it and are thus unexplained by it. The individual self becomes absorbed in the Universal. No wonder that a fully developed theory of illusion or *maya* rose subsequently out of this doctrine.

How Yajnavalkya helped in the development of Unqualified Monism of Aruni is seen in the instruction he imparted to his wife Maitreyi in what is known as the *Maitreyi Brahmana* of the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* on the nature of the Self, on immortality and the unity of God-Head. He declares that in their real nature all things are the Self, one indivi-

sible Self—not distinct selves but parts or manifestations of One Infinite Self and that there is no not-self. He says that the wife, the husband, children, riches, our relations and castemen are dear to us not for themselves but for the sake of the *Self* that exists in them. The Self is naturally dear to every one of us and it is the felt presence of the *Self* in things and persons around us that makes them dear to us. But the Self is not anything particular in each one of us. It is the Universal containing all particular things. Nothing is truly known unless it is seen in relation to the Self. It is the One concrete Reality whereas what are popularly taken as realities are abstractions. As the sound of a drum, as the tune played by a flute, as colours, touches and tastes, are abstractions apart from the drum, the flute and our powers of sight, touch and taste, so are also objects abstractions, unintelligible facts apart from the Self. When a piece of rock-salt is dissolved in water, it cannot be seen but it really exists in every part of the pot containing the water, for, from whatever portion, the water may be taken, it is found to be saltish to the taste. The Self in like manner pervades all things but is not realised everywhere. It is realised only in the life of the finite individual. At death, the individual consciousness ceases to exist. In other words, the self loses its individuality and is merged in the Universal. Maitreyi is bewildered by this doctrine, because she thought that this would cut at the very root of the immortality of the soul on which she sought enlightenment from her husband.

According to Yajnavalkya, it is only when the Universal consciousness individuates itself into subject and object that there is what we call knowledge—the distinction of the knower and the known. But when the subject or individual knower lapses into undifferentenced consciousness, the distinction of knower, known, and the ultimate ground or source of this distinction is impossible. Just as objects seen

in dreams are only apparent and not real being the creatures of the mind, so are also the objects seen in the waking state. The Rishi conceives dreamless sleep as one of *undifferenced unity* and as indicating what Brahman really is and what we shall be after death. He also extols it as a state of perfect bliss. It is also a state of ethical indifference absolutely without relations and moral distinctions. In his significant words, the father here is no father, mother no mother, the gods no gods, the thief no thief and so on.

“And when it is said that there in the *sushupti* he (the seeing person) does not see yet he is seeing, though he does not see. For, sight is inseparable from the seer, because it cannot perish. But there is then no second, nothing else different from him that he could see. And when it is said that there in the *sushupti* he does not know, yet he is knowing, though he does not know. For knowing is inseparable from the knower because it cannot perish. But there is then no second, nothing else different from him that he could know.”

Yajnavalkya's idea seems to be that the self then retains its power of knowing though it does not actually know. This power of knowing without actual knowledge is a mere abstraction and not a reality. In other words it is tantamount to extinction or absorption of the individual self in the Brahman. It is from this view that the later doctrine of illusion (*Mayavada*) was developed, as already indicated above. There is no clear *Maya* doctrine in the Upanishads but its seeds are to be seen in the teachings of the Rishis such as Aruni and Yajnavalkya.

In the entire Upanishadic literature, *Svetasvatara* is the only Upanishad in which the expression *Maya* occurs and that in verse 10 of Chapter, IV.

“Know *Maya* (illusion) to be Nature and the master of illusion to be the great Lord”.

Again in verse 9, the Rishi says,

“That from which the Lord of illusion has created all this,—the Vedas, the sacrifices with clarified butter, the sacrifices with the soma

juice, the vows, whatever is and whatever will be, and all that the Vedas speak of—to that the other (the individual self) is bound by illusion”.

It is mostly on these two verses that Sankara has built up a whole system of the philosophy of illusion.

Sankara declares creation—the world, the individual self, every object subject to time and space—as unreal, imaginary and illusory, proclaims God alone as the Only Reality, and ascribes to God a power under the name of “*Maya Sakti*” (an illusion-producing power) which makes men mistake as real what is unreal. According to this theory, nature and man are mere appearances and are made to appear as real by the said ‘*Maya Sakti*’ emanating from God. On account of his ignorance, man is unable to realise his true nature and becomes subject to this bondage of illusion from the moment of his birth and obtains liberation from such an unreal world and ultimate absorption in the Divine essence only by a true knowledge of God. In order to give the reader a better idea of this *maya* doctrine, I shall give below extracts from what Sankara himself says in his commentary on the *Brahma Sutras*.

“Scriptural passages such as “when the Self only is all this, how should we see another? (Brihadaranyaka II-4-13)” declare that for him who sees that everything is Brahman in essence, the whole phenomenal world with its actions, agents, and results of actions is non-existent”.

Again, in reply to those who say that Sankara’s doctrine of the unreality of the phenomenal world subjects the ordinary sources of knowledge, perception and inference to incredibility, he says :

“These objections, we reply, do not damage our position, because the entire complex of phenomenal existence is considered as true as long as the knowledge of the Brahman as the essence of all has not arisen, just as the phantoms of a dream are considered to be true until the sleeper wakes. For as long as a person has not reached the true knowledge of the unity of the Self, so long it does not enter his mind that the world of effects with its means and objects of right knowledge and its results of actions is untrue ; he rather, in conse-

quence of his ignorance, looks on mere effects as forming part of and belonging to himself, forgetful of Brahman being in reality the essence of all. Hence as long as true knowledge does not present itself, there is no reason why the ordinary course of secular and religious activity should not hold on undisturbed. The case is analogous to that of a dreaming man who in his dream sees manifold things, and, upto the moment of waking, is convinced that his ideas are produced by real perception without suspecting the perception to be a merely apparent one."

But if the world is unreal, ask Sankara's opponents called *Parinama Vadins*, what becomes of the doctrine taught alike in the Upanishads and the Brahma Sutras that Brahman is the material as well as the efficient cause of the world? Is not that doctrine contradicted by Sankara's view of the unreality of the world? Sankara thinks that it is not. Says he :

"The fundamental tenet which we maintain in accordance with such scriptural passage as "From this Self sprang ether etc" (Taittiriya II:1) is that the creation, sustentation and re-absorption of the world proceed from the Lord who is eternal, holy, wise and free, and who is the omniscient and omnipotent Lord,—and not from a non-intelligent *pradhana* or any other principle. That tenet we have stated in our commentary on the aphorism—"From which the origin, *etcetera* of this," and here we do not teach anything contrary to it. "But how" the question may be asked, "Can you make this last assertion while all the while you maintain the absolute unity and non-duality of the 'Self'. Listen how. Belonging to the self, as it were, of the Omniscient Lord, there are names and forms, the figments of Nescience, not to be defined either as identical with or different from Him, the germs of the entire expanse of the phenomenal world, called in Sruti and Smriti, the *Maya-Shakti* or *Prakriti* of the Omniscient Lord. Different from these is the Omniscient Lord himself, as we learn from scriptural passages such as the following :—"He who is called ether, is the revealer of all forms and names ; that within which these forms and names are contained is Brahman". Chandogya (VIII-14-1). "Let me evolve names and forms. He, the wise one, who having divided all forms and given all names sits speaking (with those names (Taittiriya Upanishad III). "He makes the one seed manifold" (Svetasvatara Upanishad VI-12). Thus the Lord depends as Lord upon the limiting adjuncts of name and form, the products of Ne-

science, just as the universal ether depends as limited ether upon the limiting adjuncts in the shape of jars, pots, *etcetera*. He rules, as regards their phenomenal life, the *Vijnanatmans* called individual souls, which are indeed one with Himself, just as the portions of ether enclosed in jars and the like are one with the Universal ether, but are limited by aggregates of instruments of action, *i.e.*, bodies produced from name and form, the presentations of Nescience. Hence, the Lord's being a Lord, His Omniscience, His Omnipotence, *etcetera*, all depend on the limitations due to the adjuncts whose essence is Nescience; while in reality, none of these qualities belong to the Self, whose true nature is seen by knowledge to be free from all adjuncts whatever. Thus scripture also says—"Where one sees nothing else, hears nothing else, understands nothing else, that is the Infinite" (Chandogya Upanishad VII-24-1). Again, "But when the Self only has become all this, how should we see another" (Brihadaranaka II-4-13). In this manner, the Vedanta texts declare that for him who has reached the state of reality, the whole phenomenal world ceases to exist."

It will be seen from the above exposition of Sankara that not only is the world an apparent and not a real world, but even those attributes of Brahman that have reference to such a world, namely, His Omniscience, His All-mightiness and the like are only apparent and not real in the highest sense. *Omniscience* means the quality of knowing 'all' and if the 'all' is unreal, the all-knowingness is also unreal. In like manner, "*Almightiness*" which means the power of doing all things cannot but be unreal, if 'doing' and *all things* are unreal. All attributes, in short, which make God what is called, in theological parlance, a Personal Being, are rejected by Sankara's attempt to conceive of Him as a Being free from everything phenomenal or one unrelated to phenomena. "As a magician" he says "is not affected by the magical illusion produced by himself, because it is unreal, so the Highest Self is not affected by the world of illusion". Not only is Iswara above *Maya*, but the knowledge of Him is, according to Sankara, the means of deliverance from *Maya*, or identical with such deliverance.

Without entering into the details of this controversy between *Mayavadins* and *Parinamavadins*, I may state that one apparent contradiction in the *Maya* theory is that for the individual soul to be subject to illusion, it must first exist—exist as a reality and not as an illusionary thing : but this real existence of the individual as such cannot of course be admitted by believers in the *Maya* theory, as it conflicts, according to them, with the perfect non-duality of Brahman. According to them, the very existence of the individual is constituted by '*avidya*' and neither in the state of bondage nor in that of liberation, does the individual really exist, so that *avidya* or illusion in all its forms must, consistently with this theory, be held to belong to *Iswara*, however, incomprehensible, and unmeaning such a proposition may be. How can there be any delusion at all if there is no one to be deluded?

Again, the advocates of the *Maya* theory seem to lose sight of one important fact that a power in God, be it *Maya-sakti* or any other, must be a real power and that cosmic changes are its effect, *i.e.*, forms that it assumes, namely the world and all that is contained in it, these also cannot but be real and not merely apparent.

Further, there is absolutely nothing in the *Brahma Sutras* which, interpreted independently of Sankara's commentary, lends any support to his peculiar theory of *Maya*, and Sankara himself seems to be somewhat aware of this, in as much as he draws very little upon the *Sutras* when he cites authorities in favour of his view. His commentary on the aphorisms is indeed full of his theory; but the expositions of his theory in the commentary are given rather in the form of independent remarks than direct explanations of the aphorisms. He indeed believes the author of the *Sutras* to be of his opinion and represents him as saying this or that from the standpoint occupied by himself; but to one who is not already imbued with Sankara's principles, it is difficult to

believe that the standpoint of the author and the commentator of the aphorisms is the same. For instance, when the author of the Sūtras speaks of Brahman as the Creator, Preserver and Destroyer of the world, as a Being of infinite knowledge, power and goodness, he does not give so much as a hint that he says all this only from the popular or *vyavaharika* point of view, and that there is a higher standpoint from which all this is seen to be false. Again, when the author of the Sūtras describes the gradual evolution of the world, he never suggests that the process described by him is a false one, one that is found to be imaginary as soon as we know the sole and absolute unity and reality of Brahman. The author of the Brahma Sūtras is indeed a Monist, affirming, in unequivocal terms, the essential unity of the world and the individual soul with Brahman, and this affords Sankara an opportunity for representing rather misrepresenting him as holding the unreality of creation; but this is to beg the whole question at issue from the very beginning,—to assume what has to be proved,—that unity is inconsistent with diversity and difference. There can be absolutely no doubt, as observed by Tattwabhusan, that the author of the Brahma Sūtras is of the opposite view, is a believer in both unity and difference, speaks of the creation and diversity of the world of matter and mind when emphasising the element of difference in it, and of its identity with the one only real Brahman when intending to bring into prominence the essential unity of the universe.

Tattwabhusan thinks and rightly too that the attempt of Sankara to establish a system of Absolute Monism on the denial of reality to the phenomenal world and to the individual soul is futile and unconvincing. The absolute monism of the Vedānta advocated by the Rishis Uddalaka Aruni, Yajñavalkya, Pippalada, Angirasa, Maundukya, is true and rational enough without the unreliable and

dangerous prop of the *Maya* theory. The fundamental mistake of this theory, the cause of all its confusion, is false idea of unity. Sankara thinks that unity is opposed not only to duality—to the notice of two or more independent realities—which it really is, but also to difference and relativity. When the Upanishads speak of Brahman as One without a second, they must be understood, thinks Sankara as meaning not only that there is no independent reality besides Him, but also that there is no world in space and time and of a diverse form, relative to and dependent on Him. This argument cuts the ground under his own feet for, if omniscience, almightiness, justice, goodness and truth like cannot be conceived except with reference to a phenomenal world, so do absolute truth, knowledge, infinity, eternality, indivisibility, unchangeability and the like derive all the meaning they bear from the ideas opposed to them, ideas implying the existence of a relative, finite, manifold and changing world. In other words, our conception of God as the Absolute, the Spaceless, the Timeless, the Unchangeable, necessarily implies a world of space, time and change and becomes unmeaning without the latter. Transcendental Monism is therefore interested not in denying the reality of such a world but in showing its relativity to and dependence on the Infinite and Absolute.

In the light of Sankara's arguments which inevitably lead us to such contradictions as are stated above, Tattvabhushan thinks that what Sankara perhaps meant and ought to have said seems to be something like this:—

“There is in Iswara a power which produces in the individual soul the illusion of things which do not really exist. As a power producing illusory appearances, it is somewhat like the power of a juggler and may therefore be called *Mayasakti*. In Iswara, *Maya* produces no effect, as He, being its wielder, is above its influence. There is therefore no *avidya* or nescience in the Lord. *Avidya* or nescience exists only in the individual and is the product of *Maya* acting upon him.

But he is released from its influence when the Lord reveals Himself to Him."

This makes Sankara's *Maya* theory more intelligible and less self-contradictory.

I shall next consider how far the Mayavadin's unreality of the world is consistent with the description of creation given in the Upanishads themselves. The first part of the second Mundaka gives a description of the production of various classes of objects from the Supreme Cause. The relation of created objects to the Creator is likened to that of sparks of fire to fire itself, a similitude, very unfavourable to Sankara's view of creation as merely apparent. The Rishi says "*This is true. As sparks similar to fire come out of a blazing fire by thousands, so, my dear, various creatures come out of the undecaying One, and also return to it.*" The Rishi closes this description by declaring the essential unity of the Creator and the created. "*The Person alone is all this: He is Karma i.e., deeds, discipline, and the Supreme undecaying Brahman. He who knows Him as hidden in the heart, my dear, cuts the knot of ignorance even here.*" And yet, Angirasa, the Rishis of the Mundaka Upanishad, is an absolute monist like Sankara and does not seem to consider creation as an illusion.

The next important description of creation is to be found in the Aitareya Upanishad, Chapter I. Although the description is somewhat fanciful and archaic (hence not produced in part II of this Manual), it is true to the two fundamental principles of the Vedantic doctrine of creation namely, that the change implied in it is real and the objects created are essentially one with the Creator. The author begins thus:—

"Verily, in the beginning, all this was the Self, one only and there was nothing else blinking whatsoever. He thought, "Shall I send forth worlds? He sent forth these worlds, *Ambhas*, *Marichi*, *Mara* and *Ap*. That *Ambhas* is above Heaven, and it is heaven, the support. The *Marichis* are the sky. *Mara* is the earth and the waters under

the earth are the *Ap* world. He thought, "There are these worlds. Shall I send forth guardians of the world? He then formed a person taking him forth from the water".

The close is similar in spirit to that of the Mund description.

"When born *i.e.*, when the Highest Self had entered the world as the individual self, He looked through all things in order to know whether anything wished to proclaim here another self. He then this Person only *i.e.*, Himself as the widely-diffused Brahman he said "I saw it".

The description of creation given in the first chapter of Brihadaranyaka, though very fanciful, is identical in spirit with those given above. The description given in the Chandogya by Rishi Aruni, already abstracted above, is far more significant and yet he is an absolute monist.

On the above accounts of creation, Tattwabhusan makes the following illuminating observations:—

"It will be seen that however mysterious a thing creation may be, however difficult it may be to conceive its real nature, the writers of the Upanishads all believe in its reality. They indeed never lost sight of the principle that in creation nothing was produced that was apart from Brahman, nothing that constituted a real duality. That there has been a change in some sense or other, or to be exact, that change in one sense or other is real, in the sense of being an object of the Divine knowledge, an effect of the Divine power of this the founders of Hindu Theism seem to have not the slightest doubt. It is true that *Svetasvara Upanishad* is the only one of the twelve principal Upanishads that calls nature by the significant name of *Maya*. But except using this much misunderstood term, the writers of this Upanishad says nothing as to the unreality of nature, but throughout his description of creation as realistic as the writers of the other Upanishads. Belief in creation or change, it (the *Maya* theory) says, is due to ignorance. Well, this ignorance must be due to a finite being. This finite being, therefore whether he be a god or the great Hiranyagarbha himself, must first be created in order that his ignorance may be possible. His creation would then be a change not due to his or any one else's ignorance, but a change related to the divine knowledge itself. Even if the finite being created were supposed to be co-eternal with, though dependent

the Supreme Being, the succession of ideas in his mind,—that in which the life of a finite being consists—his progress from relative ignorance to knowledge, even the apparent changes fancied by him, would constitute a series of changes of which the All-knowing Being must be conceived as cognisant, and which would in that sense, be real objective changes and not such as are due to the ignorance of a finite being. Creation then including the creation of finite souls, in not due to ignorance. The individualisation of Brahman in the form of finite spirits, His entrance, in the language of the *Chandogya*, into finite materials as the living soul of men and other beings, is an occurrence due to the Divine activity and irrespective of the ignorance inseparable from the conditions of finite life.”

So much for Sankara’s doctrine of *Maya*. I shall next pass on to the two passages in Yajnavalkya’s teachings that have been variously interpreted and relied on by Sankara and Ramanuja as the basis for their widely different doctrines—Absolute Monism and Qualified Monism. They are :—

Antaryami Brahmana—Brihadaranyaka—Chapter III-iii— “ He who dwells in the earth and within the earth, whom the earth does not know, whose body the earth is and who pulls (rules) the earth within, he is thy Self, the puller (ruler) within, the immortal.” “ He, who dwells in all beings (individual selves) and within all beings, whom all beings do not know, whose body all beings are and who pulls (rules) all beings within, he is thy Self, the puller (ruler) within, the immortal.”

In these and similar passages, a duality of subject and object is indeed admitted. Hence Ramanuja bases his Qualified (Vishista Advaita) Monism on these texts. But it is also open to a monistic interpreter to say that this duality is only apparent and not real and that it is not of the essence of the Supreme Self. That the Supreme Self is absolutely One—undifferenced—and without relation to any other self distinct from it, is clearly admitted by Yajnavalkya when he says in the concluding portion of this Brahmana, Verse 23.—

“ He who dwells in the seed and within the seed, whom the seed does not know, whose body the seed is and who pulls (rules) the seed within, he is thy Self, the puller (ruler) within, the immortal ; *unseen, but seeing ; unheard but hearing ; unperceived but perceiving ; unknown*

but knowing. There is no other seer but he, there is no other he but he, there is no other perceiver but he, there is no other knower but This is thy Self, the ruler within, the immortal."

Thus the Antaryami Brahmana favours Absolute Monism as much as the Maitreyi Brahmana and cannot be accepted as a scriptural authority for Ramanuja's views.

Yajnavalkya's condemnation of the world as mere apparent and not real and as an evil to be avoided and extolling of a state of absolute unity without difference and without any desire as the final and most desirable goal of man—a doctrine which finds its fullest expression in Sankarite Vedantism—has its full and unqualified support in his remarkable exposition in the third and fourth Brahmanas of the fourth chapter of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad. Yajnavalkya has no doubt a firm grasp of the truth that the fundamental fact of the universe is the unity of the Absolute in relation to which all things and beings exist. But in endeavouring to understand the true and ultimate nature of the *One*, he fails to realise that the *many* should not be left out but fully taken into account and that in manifesting Himself in the form of this infinitely variegated world the Absolute One discloses His real nature. As observed by Tattwabhashan, Yajnavalkya sees undoubtedly that in the antithetic process, a process of differentiation is involved in grasping the Infinite. The Infinite is not the finite. It is *not* this, it is *not* that. The self is *not* what is seen, he is not touched, smelt and tasted. It is the seer, hearer, toucher, smeller and taster. The Rishi fails, however, to see that this differentiating process is based on relation between the finite and the Infinite, a relation which is final and insolvable. The Infinite is all-comprehensive. In Him all things and being exist for ever and nothing perishes. In the words of Tattwabhashan,

"Yajnavalkya is wrong in disparaging the objects of the world as forms of death and in extolling an undifferentiated absolute."

unity as the only truth and the goal and destiny of human life. The Logic of Exclusion he follows in arriving at his conclusion mistakes distinction for division. But really all distinctions are based on relation and the unity they imply is not an abstract unity but a unity-in-difference. The Logic of comprehension, the only true logic, also makes distinctions. It sees that the Infinite is not the finite and the One not many; but it sees also that the finite and the Infinite, the One and the many are mutually related so that the one *without* the other is not a concrete reality but an abstraction. When one sees all this, he does not hate the world so that he may love God wholeheartedly. One then endeavours to love God in the world and the world in God. Domestic and social life is not an obstacle to the religious life but really a part of the latter."

CHAPTER IX.

THE RISHIS' CONCEPTION OF GOD AS INFINITELY DIFFERENTIATED BRAHMAN; THE DOCTRINE OF VISHISTA ADVAITA VADA OR QUALIFIED MONISM.

According to Rishis Prajapati, Indra, Chitra, among others, whose teaching was followed later on by Ramanuja, the individual self is real, the world (nature) is real, all real in relation to the Supreme Self; real in the sense of their being the self-realisation of God and phenomenal in the sense of their entire dependence on the Will of God. In other words, their reality is relative and not absolute and the final destiny of the soul is not absorption in the Divine Essence to the loss of individuality but an attainment of a state of uninterrupted consciousness of unity with the Supreme Soul—a state of unmingled bliss and unspotted holiness.

Devarishi Prajapati's teachings on the Self are said to have been reported far and wide so that they reached the *devas* and the *asuras*, the gods and the demons. The passage containing the doctrine is this:—"The Self which is free from sin, free from old age, from death and grief, from hunger and thirst, which desires nothing but what it ought to desire and imagines nothing but what it ought to

imagine, that it is which one must search out, that it is, we all must try to understand. He who has searched out self and understands it, obtains all worlds and all desires.

The theistic ring of the passage is clear. It speaks of the Supreme Self as a Person and of His knower as continuing to exist in distinction from Him even after death,—continuing in the enjoyment of worlds and desirable objects consistent with the knowledge acquired by Him. The Rishi's exposition which follows fully bears out these theistic characteristics. Of course the theism taught is not the grossly dualistic Deism held by people who have no insight into the immanence of God in man and the world. It is in entire harmony with the vision of the in-dwelling Presence of the Infinite which is the common experience of all Upanishadic sages. The tempting nature of the doctrine is said to have induced both the *devas* and the *asuras* to send representative messengers to the great teacher to take lessons from him. The gods Indra and the demons Virochana. They were required to spend thirty-two years as *brahmacharis*, pupils practicing asceticism, in the divine mansion. When they had served this period of apprenticeship and informed the teacher of their intention of learning his doctrine of the Self, he said: "*The person that is seen in the eye, that is the Self. This is what I have said. This is the immortal, the fearless, this is Brahman.*" What he said is indeed true. As all things are in a sense Brahman, why should not the person seen in the eye, who may be said to be Brahman in a special sense, be Brahman? Both the pupils had not yet learned to see God in everything. They were in the objective sphere of thought in which people seek after reality in object perception in abstraction from the percipient or knowing subject. At this stage of progress the pupils thought of the image of a person in the eyes of another person. When the former looks at the latter was identified by Prajapati with the Self and Brahman. Such an image is seen in w

and in a looking glass also. They asked their preceptor who this image was. He said, "*It is the self that is seen in everything.*" At the preceptor's directions, they cleansed, dressed and adorned themselves and looking at their shadows in a pot full of water, asked him what it was which they had seen. He answered as before,—"*What has been seen is Brahman.*" Prajapati knew that this statement could not but mislead them in the stage of thought in which the pupils were, but he also knew that the highest truth could be communicated only by slow degrees and not at all at once. He wanted his pupils to see the difficulties of this *prima facie* view of the Self, as something identical with the body and seek after a more correct view of it. They, however, did not at first see any difficulty in this view and left for their respective abodes, quite contented with what they had learnt. When Prajapati saw them going away satisfied, he pitied them and said to himself, "They both go away without having perceived and without having known the Self, and whoever of these two, whether devas or asuras, will follow this doctrine (Upanishad) will perish" and so it happened in the case of Virochana and his fellow-*asuras* to whom he (Virochana) preached this *asura* Upanishad. They thought the care of the body, dressing and adorning it and making it comfortable by all other means is the be-all and end-all of life.

Indra, however, felt the insufficiency or rather the difficulties of the doctrine of Prajapati even before reaching the Deva-loka. He felt that that poor idea of the identity of the self with the body did not correspond with the sublime utterances by which he was attracted to the Rishi. He therefore returned to Prajapati and laid his doubts before him. The master agreed with the pupil and asked him to live with him another thirty-two years as *Brahmacharin*. What he taught *Indra* at the end of the period is that the form in which we see ourselves in dreams, that is, as un-

associated with external objects, is the Self, is Brahman. The very same idea of the self was first given to King Janaka by Rishi Yajnavalkya who gives his reason for his preference of the dreaming state over the waking for the purposes of his exposition. (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad—Chapter IV-iii). In the former, the self is evidently *svayamjyothi* (self-illuminated); while in the latter, it seems to be dependent on other lights than its own. Indra felt satisfied for the time with Prajapati's answer and took his leave; but before he reached home, he felt dissatisfied with it. He had this doubt,—in sleep we are indeed freed from external dangers, but there are fears and sufferings enough in dreams. The miseries experienced in the dreaming state, though subtle, are not very different from the gross ones of waking life. So, this idea of the self also does not answer the description given in Prajapati's reported teachings. Indra therefore returns, lays his doubts before his teacher as before and agrees to the latter's proposal of staying with him for another thirty-two years.

At the close of this third period of apprenticeship, Prajapati teaches Indra as Yajnavalkya taught Janaka as his (Yajnavalkya's) last lesson that the undifferentenced state of dreamless sleep represents more truly than waking and dreaming the real nature of the Self. Janaka was quite satisfied with this doctrine. Indra too at first felt satisfied with it and went out of his preceptor's house with a contented heart. But he had to return very soon.

Far from being charmed with the utterly undifferentenced character of dreamless sleep, Indra uttered words expressing his undisguised contempt of it. Says he to his preceptor; "Sir, in that way he does not know himself (his self) that he is 'I', nor does he know anything that exists. He is gone to utter annihilation. I see no good in this"; Chandogya Upanishad VIII-11-2. Here Prajapati clearly shows through Indra's mouth the emptiness of the Unqualified Monism

taught by Aruni and Yajnavalkya. He shows that in the *undifferenced Self*, there is neither the knowledge of the Self nor that of any not-self, neither the character of the knower nor that of the known. In a 'reality' devoid of both these there cannot be anything of the character of the Self or of Brahman. But such a consequence inevitably follows when dreamless sleep is taken as representing the final condition of the self. As before, Prajapati admits the validity of Indra's objection and promises to impart the final truth to him if he would stop only five years more at his place, thus completing one hundred and one years of pupilage.

When this period was completed, Prajapati gave to Indra his final idea of the Self and of the destiny of the finite individual very different from that of Yajnavalkya. His elaborate teaching is contained in the 12th Section of Chapter VIII of the Chandogya Upanishad. The gist of it is that the states of waking, dreaming and dreamless sleep are due to the limitations imposed on the self by the body, that as knowledge survives dreamless sleep, so will it survive the death of the body and that the senses have no place in a disembodied condition. In that condition, the finite individual, far from being merged in the Infinite, lives a free life of pure bliss in the company of the gods and in the adoration of the Supreme Being.

From the above it will be seen that Prajapati's Brahman is not undifferenced like Aruni's and Yajnavalkya's, but that He, though One, contains innumerable internal differences.

As already stated above, the Qualified Monism of the Upanishadic Rishis found in later times its ablest exponent in Ramanuja whose views are diametrically opposed to those of Sankara. A considerable portion of Ramanuja's writings is taken up with the criticism of Sankara's *Maya Vada*. He emphasises the element of difference in the unity of God-Head which Sankara, in his enthusiasm for unity,

all but ignores. Ramanuja thinks that though God is indeed the Absolute Reality, the differences that constitute the created world are not unreal or merely apparent but real modes of God's existence. The material world and the finite soul existed eternally in a potential or unmanifested form in God and became manifest in creation. As finite and partial modes of His existence, they do not represent His infinitude and if they are one with Him in one sense, they are different from Him in another. Difference, in fact, is not opposed to unity, and God, though the sole Reality, comprehends in Him the differences which make the world of material objects and finite souls. The individual's union with God is not, therefore, a union of mere knowledge, but also one of love, reverence, obedience, trust, gratitude and all other moral sentiments, such as should exist between two spirits of which the one is infinitely superior to the other.

According to Ramanuja, Nature is related to God as the body is to the soul. As the body depends for its life on the soul, so does Nature depend for its existence and its movements on God. As the soul penetrates the body, as it were, and keeps every part of it living and active, so does God pervade Nature and act in every part of it. Nature cannot exist without God and is, in that sense, one with Him. The Highest Person forms the Self of all and all things ; intelligent and non-intelligent have no separate existence from Him, because those intelligent and non-intelligent things which exist in the form of subject and object and which exist also in all conditions, constitute the body of the Highest Person and are in consequence subject to His control.

In dealing with the relation of God to the individual soul, Ramanuja says likewise—that as the soul is to the body, so is God to the individual self. The latter cannot exist without the former ; it is dependent on Him. God is the very *Self*

of Jeeva by which Ramanuja means not that the finite consciousness is essentially identical with the Infinite, but that the finite cannot exist without the Infinite. In the case of both Nature and the individual soul, what Ramanuja teaches is not their unity or identity with God in any real sense, but their inseparable connection with him; To him 'nature is God' means nothing more than "nature cannot exist without God, or nature implies God."

In this connection, it will be advantageous to recollect the fundamental fact that religion evinces itself in three ways—in our conception of God, in our conception of ourselves and in our conception of the relation between God and ourselves; in other words, in our conception of the Infinite Self, in our conception of our individual self and in our conception of the relation between the Infinite Self and the individual self. To a superficial observer, the finite and the Infinite seem to be absolutely unconnected—nay, mutually opposed to each other at first sight. One of them appears to be real and the other unreal. To people without philosophical reflection, the finite alone is real and the Infinite unreal or doubtful. Some others conceive, as we have seen in the preceding chapter, the Infinite alone as real and the finite as unreal—nay imaginary. When, however, the transcendent and the immanent nature of the Infinite is clearly understood, it will be seen that the Infinite unrelated to the finite is indeed an abstraction. As the Infinite containing and supporting the finite, God is not only real but the only reality. A finite abstracted from the Infinite is indeed unreal; but a finite subsisting in the Infinite, far from being unreal, is so real that apart from relation to it, the Infinite itself is really an abstract idea devoid of reality. The finite self and the world of matter are therefore realities being dependent upon the Absolute and unconditioned Reality, the Infinite.

Man, therefore, as an agent, as *Vjñānamāyatma*, has a real and distinct place in the Infinite. His individuality as a finite soul cannot be merged in the Universal self in certain circumstances. The Infinite in manifesting Himself as self, does not lose His infinitude. Our knowledge of an object perceived through our senses, is indeed His knowledge, but our finitude, for example, our inability to know at the present moment what is going on away from our eyes, is not His, for, all things are eternally present to Him. In this sense, therefore, the Infinite never becomes or manifests Himself as the finite and the distinction between the finite and the Infinite remains irresolvable. The most correct way of expressing the relation of the finite to the Infinite, is suggested by Tattwabodhan, to say that the finite exists in the Infinite as a moment or content in a potential form as held by Ramanuja and it is the finite, not the Infinite and not the Infinite as such which manifests itself in time and space as the human self. That this finite moment or content persists unresolved in the Infinite even in the state of profound dreamless sleep is proved by the phenomenon of re-waking.

In whatever aspect we may look upon God's own Being, He is found to be distinct yet related to the object. He is One but the objects manifold; but the one unrelated to many is meaningless; one means one in many. He is permanent and unchangeable; but the permanent, the changeable, unrelated to the transient, the changeable is meaningless. Permanent means permanent among transients and unchangeable means unchangeable in midst of flow of changes. He is out of space. He is support of objects in space but is not Himself extended. But 'out of space' is meaningless except with reference to objects in space. Our conception of God as the Absolute, the Spaceless, the Timeless, the Unchangeable, necessitates

implies a world of space, time and change and becomes unmeaning without the latter.

I reproduce below what Sri Aurobindo has stated on this subject :—

“ People are apt to speak of the Adwaita, as if it were identical with Mayavada monism, just as they speak of Vedanta as if it were identical with Adwaita only ; that is not the case. There are several forms of Indian philosophy which base themselves upon the One Reality, but they admit also the reality of the world, the reality of the Many, the reality of the differences of the Many as well as the sameness of the One (*Bhedabheda*). But the many exist in the One and by the One, the differences are variations in manifestation of that which is fundamentally ever the same. This we actually see as the universal law of existence where oneness is always the basis with an endless multiplicity and difference in the oneness ; as for instance there is one mankind but many kinds of man, one thing called leaf or flower but many forms, patterns, colours of leaf and flower. Through this we can look back into one of the fundamental secrets of existence, the secret which is contained in the one reality itself. The oneness of the Infinite is not something limited, fettered to its unity ; it is capable of an infinite multiplicity. The Supreme Reality is an Absolute not limited by either oneness or multiplicity but simultaneously capable of both ; for both are its aspects, although the oneness is fundamental and the multiplicity depends upon the oneness.”

I further quote below the view of Sri Ramakrishna Parama Hamsa on this important theme as recorded by Romain Holland.

“ But Ramakrishna expressly maintains that it is absurd to pretend that the world is unreal so long as we form part of it, and receive from it for the maintenance of our own identity the unquenchable conviction (although hidden in our own lantern) of its reality. Even the saint who comes down from *Samādhi* (ecstasy) to the plane of ordinary life is forced to return to the envelope of his “ differentiated ” ego, however attenuated and purified. He is flung back into the world of relativity. So far as his ego is relatively real to him, so far will this world also be real ; but when his ego has been purified, he sees the whole world of phenomena as the manifold manifestation of the Absolute to the senses.”

Again, Unqualified Monism is, *prima facie* not conducive to the cultivation of true worship. The two conditions which are necessary for worship are: firstly, the object of worship must be in the inmost heart of the worshipper; there must be an inseparable connection between the two and the worshipper must be entirely dependent on the object of worship. Secondly, there must be a clear difference between the worshipper and the object of worship. The latter must be infinitely greater than the former. Current Dualism of the ordinary deistic type followed by people who have no insight into the immanence of God in man and the world is opposed to the first of these conditions. When the worshipper says to the Object of worship, "Thou art my life, my inmost Self, I cannot live a moment without Thee, I am nothing apart from Thee", current Dualism opposes this deep flow of devotion and says "Why so? I am indeed made by God, but I am independent of Him, apart from Him. To say that man cannot live a moment without God is to deny man's freedom". Similarly, whenever any high truth implying the inseparable relation of God and man is uttered, whenever man's love, holiness and power are explained as reflections of God's love, holiness and power, current Dualism smells Monism in such explanation, as observed by Tattwabhusan, protests against them and thus keeps aloof from higher faith and spiritual exercises. On the other hand, Unqualified Monism is against the second condition. Whenever the worshipper feeling his own littleness and the greatness of the object of his worship, approaches at the feet of the latter, reverently praises His infinite perfections, and bowing down in humility, says: "I am the eye and Thou art the light, I am unloving, but Thou art loving, I am sinful, but Thou art holy, save me from my blindness and from my sins, and make me one of Thy humblest servants", undifferentiated monism, unable on account of its blindness to the difference between the finite and the

Infinite, to solve the mystery of this sweet Dualism, sees only ignorance and sentiment in it. It says derisively "All is Brahman—who worships whom"?

It is only the Qualified Monism that sees both the elements of unity and difference in knowledge which constitutes the true basis of deep spiritual life. It sees the Object of worship in the worshipper and the worshipper in the Object of worship; the Teacher in the disciple and the disciple in the Teacher, the devotee in the Lord and the Lord in the devotee. The Object of worship, the Lord with infinite perfections, is Himself the life of the worshipper, the cause of his activity, the force that impels him to worship. Faith, love, humility, ardour, all the constituents of worship—are infused by Him into the heart of the worshipper, who cannot advance a step in the path of worship without His inspiration. But, on the other hand, true worship is not possible without difference. Worship arises from the union and relation of the perfect and the imperfect; though, therefore, the worshipper lives in the Worshipped and is inspired by Him, the one is distinct from the other. In the act of worship, unity and difference are wonderfully blended. Neither pure Dualism nor pure Monism can afford a true basis of worship. Hence the doctrine of unity-in-difference as visualised in Qualified Monism (*Vishista Advaita Vada*) alone affords a rational basis of worship. Looked at either as theories or as systems of spiritual culture, Pure Dualism and Pure Monism are both only one-sided and not absolute truths. The absolute truth is their harmony in the doctrine of Unity-in-difference. True Religion, says *Tattwabhusan*, is like the shield of *Avanthinagar* in the story; one side of it monistic and the other dualistic. The story referred to runs thus:—

A shield, of which one side was made of gold, and the other of silver, hung from the palace-gate of the ancient city of *Avanthinagar*. Two horsemen approaching it from opposite directions admired, one its golden, the other its silvery brilliance, utterly ignorant of its dual

character. Having differed, they came to high words and ultimately to blows. They were separated and reconciled by a third person who showed them both sides of the shield.

In this connection, I may also state that various attempts have been made at different times by different philosophers to reconcile and harmonise the *maya* theory of Sankara with the realistic doctrine of Ramanuja. But I find none more illuminating, searching, logical and appealing than the exposition of Tattawabhushan. I am therefore prompted to give below an extract from it:—

“ If the world of time and space is really relative to God, it cannot but be an illusion to think of it as something independent of Him and to this illusion, every created being who has not attained the supreme illumination, is subject. The illusion is not due to any fault of his, but is the necessary result of the conditions of his being. It must therefore be ascribed to God Himself, the author of his being. The question then occurs, whether a relative, dependent thing, a thing which is nothing apart from its support, can be called a thing at all when its relativity, its dependence is once seen. When the world is seen to be related to God as thought to a thinker, as action to an agent, its concreteness is gone, it dwindles into an abstract quality and it seems unworthy of being affirmed in a way which may imply that it is anything apart from the Reality to which it belongs as a quality. When God has been affirmed, when the Thinker has been affirmed, the world, His thought, seems to have been affirmed also, and it appears foolish, a mere concession to popular ignorance, to affirm the existence of the world separately. The popular notion of the world is that of a concrete independent reality. The idea of such a reality is truly sublated—proved to be false—by true knowledge. To the idealist, to the Vedantist, the world ceases to exist as a reality, *i.e.*, as a concrete independent object; when, therefore, he says with the unenlightened masses that the world exists, he is aware of using *Vyavaharika*, *i.e.*, popular or practical language and not giving utterance to *paramarthika* or real truth. When the relativity of things has been seen, when God has been seen to be the only concrete, independent, absolute reality, a distinction cannot but be made between absolute truth and truth that is only relative. The existence of the world is seen to be only relative truth, the only absolute truth being the existence of God. And when we see that things are not what they seem, we cannot but wonder at the power which

makes things seem what they are not and see also its resemblance to the power wielded by a successful juggler."

"Again, there is a sense in which the attainment of emancipation is the destruction of the individual self *i.e.*, of that figment of a self which the unenlightened intellect of the natural man erroneously conceives as existing independently of the Supreme Self. On the attainment of true self-knowledge, it is seen that there is no such thing really existing, but that it is the universal, cosmic Self that shines as the self of all finite beings—that manifests itself through those thoughts, feelings and volitions that we call our own. There is, then, something to be renounced, something to be destroyed in order that the individual may be united to the Universal. There is really something to be merged and lost in Brahman. But it is only a figment, only an appearance, something that seems real to the blurred vision of the unenlightened man, but has no existence for enlightened Reason. It is this and not any real object that is merged and lost in God who is seen to be All-in-all."

This, then, is Tattwabhusan's interpretation of Sankara's doctrine of the individual soul's absorption in God.

I quote below Sri Aurobindo's view on this subject :

"The individual soul is the spiritual being which is sometimes described as an eternal portion of the Divine but can also be described as the Divine himself supporting his manifestation as the Many. This is the true spiritual individual which appears in its complete truth when we get rid of the ego and our false separative sense of individuality, realise our oneness with the transcendent and cosmic Divine and with all beings. It is this which makes possible the Divine Life. Nirvana is a step towards it ; the disappearance of the false separative individuality is a necessary condition for our realising and living in our true eternal being, living divinely in the Divine. But this we can do in the world and in life."

Before closing this chapter, I may state that the human soul having been created to exemplify and satisfy God's own Love, He loves it for ever. Union of the soul with God in love cannot therefore be annihilation or extinction, assimilation or absorption, but is its complete self-realisation in rapturous enjoyment of Him as the God of unrivalled Beauty, Holiness and Love. The flame of His Eternal Love burns in the soul

not to consume but to brighten, not to quench but to sub-
 mate, not to extinguish but to transform.

The basic idea involved in the expression "*Union of the soul with God in love*" is that for Love to attain union with self has first to be completely obliterated. It is not interestedness, it is not altruism, it is not devotion, it is sheer self-elimination. Says the Sufi poet: "When you go out, He will come in". God deigns to dwell in the heart only when it is thoroughly cleansed of self; rather, when the soul enters the sanctuary, it shall severely leave behind the narrow, insulated self. In other words, union of the heart with God in love is the complete effacement of self-consciousness. This truth may be illustrated by a short story. A pilgrim in quest of an asylum, knocks at a door. To his query from in-door, 'Who is that?' he makes the answer "It is I". "In this chamber there can be no room for two," declared the voice from within. The pilgrim returns a year after a year, resumes his request and knocks again. To his old query the answer this time is, "I am Thou", and the dividing door vanishes. It is evidently this sublime state of the complete union of heart and will with God which the ancient Rishis teach us to aspire after as *Immortality*, *Bliss*, Buddha as *Nirvana*, Krishna in the *Bhagavadgita* as *Brahmi Sthithi* and Jesus in the Gospels as *Perfection*.

CHAPTER X.

THE RISHIS' CONCEPTION OF THE HUMAN SOUL OR SELF AND OF ITS FINAL DESTINY.

Says Yama (the God of Death) to Nachiketa in the *Katha Upanishad*:—"The knowing self neither is born nor dies. It is not produced from anything nor is anything produced from it. It is unborn, eternal, everlasting and undiminished. It is not destroyed when the body is destroyed." It is

therefore that the finite self existed eternally in a potential or unmanifested form in God as already stated in the previous chapter and became manifest in creation in the furtherance of His mysterious purposes. In other words, God has flung forth in a thousand ways consubstantial sparks from the blazing flame of His Power, Knowledge and Love in the form of individual finite selves (Mundaka II-i-1). It is to these individual selves, in the conscious life of these selves, He has made possible the revelation of His eternal ideas, the disclosure of the Reality of His Supreme Self, to bring home to them the inmost meaning, the deepest significance of truth and wisdom, goodness and righteousness.

As to the Vedantic idea of Spirit or Self, the clearest definition of it is in the Aitareya Upanishad III-1,2

"Who is the Self whom we worship? Which among these things is that Self? It is verily that by which one sees visible objects, by which one hears sound, by which one smells smell, by which one knows a good and a bad taste. This, what is called the heart, this what is called the sensorium, consciousness, activity, ideation, reason, intellect, knowledge, power of grasping, attention, meditation, alertness, memory, determination, resolution, vitality, desire, will—all these are names of reason."

The first part of the definition makes the Self not the instrument of knowing but a knowing being. The second part enumerates a few internal manifestations of the Self.

Nothing can be more beautiful than the allegory which the oldest of the Vedas contains illustrating the distinction between the individual and the Supreme Soul. The Spirit of God, as a living embodiment, has been likened into a swift-winged bird descending from the etherial skies to make her abode on the tree of human life. As the mother bird broods over the symbolical egg and at last leads out her feathered offspring into the swelling harmonies of the upper air, so does the Supreme Spirit breed and bring up our spirits, at last carrying us on its wings into the music of the Infinite. According to the Svetasvatara Upanishad, these two birds,

the Supreme Soul (Paramatman) and the individual (Jeevatman), always united, of the same name, live on the same tree (the human body). One enjoys the sweet fruit of the tree; the other looks on, a witness, needing no food, and enjoys. Dwelling on the tree with the Supreme Soul, the deluded soul in worldly relations is grieved by the want of power; when it perceives the Ruler separate from worldly relations, its grief ceases. When the beholder beholds the golden-coloured Maker, the Lord, the Soul, the Brahman, then having become wise, shaking off all worldly vice, without taint of any kind, he obtains the highest bliss. This not only sets forth the distinction between the two spirits but also defines their relations, indicates the process of their alienation and the process of their ultimate union.

Suffice it for the purposes of this chapter to say that the human self is an emanation from the Infinite. The body, which is the self's physical encasement, is in itself, as it does, the principle of life which animates the body in common with the animal, the vegetable and the mineral. The body of existence, is only its temporary abode and the channel through which it passes into activity or can hold its course with its fellow-men and with the outer world. The self is an independent spiritual entity, an individual unit consisting of the spiritual ego and the personal intelligence and will, which retains its integrity; and it will not be dissolved by the dissolution of the body, but simply be released from its corporeal encasement. This true self lies beneath our personality, our individuality, from the cradle to the grave, in spite of all the changes of our body, in spite of the fact that every particle of matter has been replaced countless times in our life. With every breath of air that is drawn, with every morsel of food that is eaten, a vast succession of changes takes place. The elements that make up the body, its heat, its electric con-

bulk, its colour, are rearranged and changed every moment. Perpetually, we are in the process of a physical regeneration. But our identity is never lost.

This abiding self is in no way homogeneous with the stuff of which the body is composed. It is invisible ; it has no shape, no size, no weight, no colour, no material whatever in common with physical substance. It is pure spirit, begets thoughts, feelings, desires, hopes and fears of a purely spiritual nature like itself. And although immensely influenced by the body in which it dwells and by the outward world around it, it is singly and alone a personal unit responsible to God for all it does and for its proper control of the body and no less for its neglect of the body and the consequences of all failure to maintain its own supremacy.

Though an emanation from the Infinite, the self is finite and its finiteness consists in its being encased in the *Pancha Kosas* or the five sheaths according to the *Taittiriya Upanishad*, that is, in its having a body of gross matter known as the material sheath (*Annamaya kosa*) and four additional strata of finer substance ; and these are the vital sheath (*Pranamaya kosa*), corresponding to the life ; the sensuous sheath (*Manomaya kosa*) corresponding to the senses ; the conceptional sheath (*Vijnanamaya kosa*) corresponding to the intellect ; and the blissful sheath (*Anandamaya kosa*) corresponding to the emotions in man. These five sheaths are the five individualising powers concealing the essential infinitude of the self. In other words, body, life, senses, intellect and emotion constitute the individuality of a finite being and when the gross material body perishes at death, the finite-soul is conceived as continuing its individual existence in association with its *linga* or *sukshma sharira*, i.e., subtle body formed of the four remaining principles of individualisation.

Prana or life indicated in the *Pranamaya kosa* exists in five forms, *prāna*, *āpana*, *vyāna*, *udāna* and *samāna* and per-

forms all the vital functions of the body, such as respiration, digestion and the movements of the limbs. At death, the airs, though their actions cease, are supposed to preserve the powers and to be reincarnated with the finite soul, or carried with it to the divine regions according as the fate of the soul happens to be.

The *Manomaya kosa* or the sensuous sheath is held to represent the principle of change and differentiation.

The fourth, *Vijnanamaya kosa* or the conceptional sheath is believed to represent the principle of unity. To it belongs the function of referring attributes to substances, effects to causes, changes to permanent agents or subjects of change, and of referring all mental phenomena, all feelings, thoughts, desires and actions to a permanent, self-identical and self-conscious soul. On all mental experiences it impresses the form 'I' or 'me'. "It is I", it says, "that feel, think, desire and act." "In all things, these feelings, thoughts, actions etc., are mine," it says. The *Vijnanamaya kosa*, it will thus be seen, constitutes the proper individuality of the finite soul. Until we transcend it, we do not see the soul's true nature as spirit, as a self-conscious being referring all experiences to itself and by the very act distinguishing itself from them.

The fifth or the *Anandamaya kosa* is the capacity of the soul to enjoy happiness. It manifests itself indistinctly in every mortal pleasure, even the lowest; whereas its highest manifestation is seen in moments of direct God-consciousness when the One undivided Infinite Self is seen both within and without, filling all time, space and being.

In each higher stage of spiritual life represented by the aforesaid sheaths, we identify the self with a subtler and subtler object and ascribe to it a higher and higher function. Each higher sheath is, therefore, according to the Rishis, a truer representation of the self than the lower. But as each of them is an object characterised by being known and is not self-knowing, none represent

true self, which is a self-knowing subject and not the object of knowledge to any one else than itself. Self or soul is therefore a non-material, intangible, invisible, living, feeling, thinking, emotional, self-conscious, free-willed being, referring all its experiences to itself as to a centre or source.

Unto the self are granted, even because it is truly and verily an emanation from God, exalted powers and activities by virtue of which the impressions on the senses, common to it with the brute, are given the higher significance; the power of memory, to retain and call up again the past; the power of imagination to look forth into the future, fly in thought to other climes or build before the mind's eye ideal structures; the faculties of judging and comparing and the conceptions of likeness, number, time and space, through which the facts of the world are classified and interpreted; the intuitions such as those of purpose, causation and uniting law by which the medley of events is reduced to an intelligible whole; the powers of abstraction and expression by which it builds up the beautiful edifice of language and the solid masonries of logic. The unalterable serenity which reigns in nature gives place to the dramatic agitations of consciousness in the self. Unlike nature around it, it finds that it enjoys the peculiar privilege of freedom of thought and liberty of will, that it has a power over nature and over itself and that it can exercise it as it chooses. It labours therefore to make these conform to its wishes and conceptions and minister to its delights.

Above all, the self is a clearer manifestation than ought else of the Divine Author of all and bears a deeper stamp and impress of His nature than any other thing whatever. On earth, there is nothing great but man, in man there is nothing great but the self. That supreme internal witness of men, as *Manu* calls it, that vital spark of heavenly flame, that mysterious principle in us, that spiritual force,—the self, how eloquently it speaks of God. It is, therefore, the

highest entity in creation. It is not an organ but animates and exercises all the organs. It is not a function like power of memory, of calculation, of comparison, but it penetrates and uses them as hands and feet, in fact, as its own powers. It is not a faculty but a light. It is not an intellect or will but the master of the intellect or will, the background of our being in which they lie. When it breathes through man's intellect, it is genius; when it breathes through his will, it is virtue; when it flows through his affections, it is love.

In Brihadaranyaka, Yajnavalkya gives a most comprehensive exposition of the self as the knowing subject in his conversation with King Janaka (Chap. IV, third Brahmana). To the king's query 'What is the light of man?', the king first refers him to the sun, next to the moon, then to fire, afterwards to the sound. Dissatisfied with the King's evasive answers, the king asks him: "When the sun has set, O, Yajnavalkya, and the moon has set and the fire is gone out and the sound hushed, what is then the light of man?" Yajnavalkya said: "The self indeed is his light, for having the self alone as his light, man sits, moves and does his work and returns." To the king's query: "What is that self?", Yajnavalkya replied: "*He who is within the heart, surrounded by the Pranas (senses), the person of knowledge. He, remaining the same, dwells along the two worlds, as if thinking, as if moving. During sleep (in dream) he transcends this world and all the worlds, of death (all that falls under the sway of death, all that is perishable). In other words, the self, the knowing subject, has consciousness for his essence, persists without change through the states of waking, dreaming, sushupti (deep sleep), death, migration and its final deliverance.*" The character of the self is thus described by Rishi Svetaketu:—"The individual self is to be known as a hundredth part of the hundredth part of the point of a hair. And yet

worthy of obtaining infinitude. It is neither male nor female, nor is it neuter. It is protected by whatever body it takes."

Nothing can be compared to the self's mobility, its power of assimilation, its growth, function, fruitfulness, its tendencies and complexities. It is a free cause, a separate island of individual will in the midst of the great ocean of Divine Will. Being an emanation from the Supreme soul, it is indestructible even as its Author is immortal. In other words, the soul is that imperishable essence which, as Dr. Martineau has observed, is "*too adamant for the weight even of Infinity to crush out.*" Besides, the soul is receptive, living, fertile; the soul, which is the sublimest in all created nature, is according to our Hindu ideas, the female principle; it is overshadowed, it conceives, bears, brings forth. When united with God's Spirit, there is endless change, motion, impulse, aspiration, hope, pain, joy, insight, resolution.

Again, it has taken God's evolution millions and millions of years to produce the free-willed and self-conscious person called *purusha*. Unless personality is something indestructible, all the labours of His evolution are clearly a prodigious waste, and not merely a prodigious waste but an unreasoning waste. There is no doubt therefore that He has destined the individual self whom He has created in His own image and moulded in His own essence, to be immortal and to find his destiny and delight in Him.

I shall give a few more characteristics of this wonderful self as gleaned and summarised from the widely scattered philosophical writings of Tattwabhashan.

According to Sankara, the Prince of adwaitic philosophers, the self is not contingent in the case of any person, for, it is self-evident. The self is not established by the proofs of the existence of the self. Perception and other proofs which are employed in the case of things not proved but to be proved, are founded on it. No one assumes such things as ether and the like as self-evident and needing no

and believe things to exist. In other words, it is only knowledge, in consciousness, and in this sense, in a knowing conscious being, that we can know, think and believe things to exist. Now, knowledge or consciousness constitutes the very nature, the very essence, as it were, of a knowing being, a mind or spirit. If it be true, therefore, that things exist only in relation to mind, the same truth may be stated in the form—‘Things exist in mind or spirit.’ The *relation to* bears the same sense as the *‘in’*. We find therefore, this latter form of the truth preferred almost everywhere in Vedantic works. Our philosophers saw the truth of Idealism—the relativity of subject and object, mind and matter, as much as Western thinkers, and stated it clearly, if somewhat crudely. Idealistic expressions scattered throughout the *Upanishads*. Only two or three will be quoted hereunder. The *Aitareya Upanishad*, for example, after enumerating the principal classes of objects animate and inanimate, says :—“All these are led by Reason and rest in Reason ; the world is led by Reason and Reason is its support. Reason is Brahman.” (III. 3) The *Prashna* prefates an enumeration of things with the statement “As, my dear, birds take shelter in a tree for rest, so that rests in the Supreme Self.” (II. 7) The *Katha* says “This Person, who wakes while all persons sleep, making desirable object after another, that alone is bright, that alone is Brahman, that verily is called the Immortal. In it rest the worlds, and none go beyond it. This is that.” (V.

The question now is, what sort of Idealism is it that the Vedanta teaches? Idealism is of three kinds, Subjective, Objective and Absolute. To say that objects exist in relation to individual minds only, is subjective Idealism. To say, for instance, that the paper before us is an aggregate or series of sensations in our mind and nothing more, is to speak like a Subjective Idealist. To say that these sensations are produced by the Divine Mind, which is outside our mind

and in which there are ideas corresponding to our ideas, is Objective Idealism. Again, to say that the paper indeed is constituted by ideas, but that these ideas exist in an Infinite Mind and it is these very ideas of the Divine Mind, and not their ectypes or reflections, that we know, is Absolute Idealism. Now, it is evidently this last mentioned species of Idealism that the Upanishads teach. This is proved (1) negatively by their saying nothing as to the objects of our perception being reflections or representations of ideas existing in a Mind external to ours, and (2) positively by their oft-repeated identification of the individual mind with the Universal.

Among the Rishis of the Upanishads, it is *Indra*, a Deva Rishi, liberated by the knowledge of his identity with Brahman, who grasped the aforesaid idealistic truth most firmly and expressed it most clearly. In the *Kaushitaki Upanishad*, he teaches Pratardana, a Rig-Vedic hero, the unity of all things in one undivided consciousness, the presence of the Universal in every individual, a system of Idealism which does not accept the popular dualism of mind and matter as realities independent of each other. People without philosophical reflection regard colours, sounds, tastes, smells and touches as qualities of material, non-mental things; but the Upanishads regard them as dependent on the Self. Says Indra :

“ One should not try to know speech, for speech without the speaker is an abstraction and cannot be properly known ; one should try to know the speaker. One should not try to know action ; one should try to know the agent. One should not try to know going ; one should try to know him who goes. One should not try to know enjoyment, intercourse and offspring ; one should try to know the knower of enjoyment, intercourse and offspring. One should not try to know form ; one should try to know the knower of form. One should not try to know sound ; one should try to know the hearer. One should not try to know smell ; one should try to know the smeller. One should not try to know the taste of food ; one should try to know the knower of the taste of food. One should not try to know pleasure

and pain ; one should try to know the knower of pleasure and pain. One should not try to know mind ; one should try to know the thinker. These ten elements of the objective world exist in relation to consciousness and the ten elements or phases of consciousness exist in relation to the objective world. If there were no elements of the objective world, there would be no elements of consciousness. If there were no elements of consciousness, there would be no elements of the objective world. No form or entity is possible from only one of the two sides. This, the concrete Reality, is not many but one. As the circumference of the wheel of a car is placed on the spokes and the spokes on the nave, so are the elements of the objective world placed on the elements of consciousness and the elements of consciousness placed on life. This life is the conscious self, blissful, unfading and immortal."

The substance of what Indra says is that as the objects of our powers of knowing, such as colour, taste, etc., and the objects of our powers of acting, such as movement, cannot be known and thought of apart from the knower and the agent, they are not concrete objects. What can be known and thought of is the knower and the agent. He alone therefore is a concrete object. But in knowing the knower and the agent, we necessarily know the known and the action.

The self is not confined to any particular object or part in space. If it were so confined, it could not know other objects or parts in space nor does it occupy any portion of space beyond them. The self is out of space.

Likewise, the self is not confined in time. It is the self which knows what is present. It is the self which knows what was past and what was more remotely past. It is the self which shall know the future and what is more remotely future. In these cases, though the object of knowledge differs according as it is present, past or future, the self, the knowing subject, does not change, for it is always present. And as it is always present, the self cannot be destroyed even when the body is reduced to ashes. The self is therefore timeless and deathless.

The nature of the world revealed to our individual consciousness is its true nature. There is no other means of learning the true nature of the world than what we call the individual consciousness.

All the sensations which we feel are produced by the sentient activity of the self, which, however, remains unchanged as a permanent eye-witness, when sensations change and follow one another. It should also be remembered that it is not the physical senses that perceive, but it is the self which is the real percipient. It is through the sense organs that the self manifests all its activity. Whatever the self does, whether it feels sensations like colour and taste or draws an inference or puts forth volitions, it does everything consciously, because it is conscious. If it were unconscious, it could not do all this. Its activity depends on its consciousness. What is unconscious can never be active. It is wrong therefore to suppose that our sensations are produced by unconscious matter lying outside us.

Again, our self-consciousness (our seeing, hearing, feeling, etc., our perceptions), is not only not dependent on our will or volition but is the cause and condition of our will. If it is due to any body's will, it is the Will of the One in Whose Hand our mind is, Who never forgets anything and Who is playing with the mind the solemn sport of forgetting and remembering.

In passing, I may state that Aphorism 54 of the third *pada*, third chapter of the *Brahma Sutras*, incidentally refers to the materialistic view of mind as a function of matter and refutes it. Sankara in his commentary on the aphorism says among other things:—

“ We must further ask our opponent what he conceives to be the nature of this consciousness which he assumes to spring from the elements. The materialists do not admit the existence of anything beyond the four elements. If they say that consciousness is the perception of the elements and whatever springs from the elements, then our reply is that the elements and their products being

the objects of consciousness, the latter cannot be a quality of the former, for it is contradictory that anything should act upon itself. Fire, though ever so hot, cannot burn itself. A dancer, though so well-trained, cannot mount on his own shoulders. So, consciousness, if it were a quality of the elements and their products, could not make these its objects; but consciousness does actually make external and internal things its objects. Hence as the existence of the consciousness of the elements and their products is admitted, so its distinction from them should also be admitted. And as consciousness is the essence of the self we speak of, it must be distinct from the body, and as consciousness is uniform (under varying conditions), it must also be eternal. This conclusion also follows from the fact that the self, even when it has passed through another state of consciousness, recognises itself as the perceiver (of a past state) and makes remembrance and such other states possible."

The truth of the non-materialistic origin of the self and of the unity and permanence of the knowing self thus stands clearly established.

We have already seen that the self is an individual entity and is entirely independent of the senses and uses them as its instruments. In the Chandogya Upanishad, Section III of Chapter III, the five senses have been described as the door-keepers of Svarga (heaven) world. "He who knows the five men of Brahman as the door-keepers of the Svarga enters himself the Svarga world". The meditation on the five gates and the five gate-keepers of the heart referred to by the Rishi is meant to be subservient to the meditation on Brahman as the ether in the heart, which, as it is at the end, is actually seen and heard by the senses as within the heart. The spiritual powers of the senses and accessories of the self cannot, therefore, be overlooked. The senses and the self perceive together that the great God encompasses us. The two work together, the senses playing one note, the soul striking another and the two together produce the instantaneous harmony of the Spirit of God. In his bodily and spiritual powers, man is an indivisible unity. For instance, in our vision of God, the ph

eye does penetrate so far as to give instant messages to that other and deeper eye whose function it is to see the Spirit of God face to face. As Max-Muller says: "Man sees to a certain extent and there his eye-sight breaks down; there presses upon him something, whether he likes it or not, a perception of the unlimited or the Infinite." The sight of the soul and the sight of the senses form a continuous process whose end is to realise the infinite presence of God. When the spiritual powers are quick, the senses respond readily to detect and interpret the mysterious Reality, as observed by Protap Chunder Muzumdar. The music of the consecrated senses, the purified bodily organs of the God-seeker, sends an acceptable song to the Holy Throne. For, as the world incarnates God, the senses incarnate the soul. The eye stands for faith, which sees God face to face. The ear stands for conscience which hears direct the Divine Voice. The taste stands for joy which is the immediate effect of the knowledge of God. The sense of smell suggests the fragrance of God's love. The embrace of the Spirit touches and thrills through as when we bathe in the breezy sunlight of the morning. The fulness and joyousness of the Divine Presence is possible only when the forces of the body and the forces of the soul bear evidence together that the glorious Presence enfolds us. The senses alone can partly make the joyousness of the experience; the powers of the soul can partly make the joy, truth and sanctity; the two together can make the spiritual perception perfect. Besides, there is no seeing of the Divine Countenance until the heart in its purity responds to the impression and there is no purity of heart until the senses without and within act in deepest harmony. It is on the unity and harmony of the senses and the spirit, is based that exalted holy injunction—Love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart, *i.e.*, with all the warmth and tenderness of feelings, with all thy mind, *i.e.*, with all the light of wisdom and knowledge, with all thy soul, *i.e.*, with

all the devotional sentiments and aspirations, and with thy strength, *i.e.*, with all thy energy and pract earnestness.

All the organs of man, bodily and spiritual, do their functions perfectly, adding to the wonderful effect, when our soul beholds the Universal Soul. When Moses saw the burning bush, or Jesus the descending dove, or his disciples saw the three figures on the Mount of Transfiguration, when Arjuna beheld the marvels of Divine manifestation in the frame-work of material nature, or when Chaitanya saw the effulgence of his sweet Hari in the shining water of a lake, or when Brother Lawrence realised the fulfilment of God's Providence in a withered and leafless tree, or when Emerson witnessed the splendour of divinity in a blooming rose, or when Debendranath Tagore beheld the God of glory by the bed-side of his dying grandmother, or when Rameshkrishna Paramahansa perceived his Divine Mother in a material image, it was not merely a devout imagination but the senses beheld also. At the supreme moment, the entire human organism becomes instinct with latent fire and strange things are said and done. There is nothing merely material. All is spiritual to the spiritually-minded. Thus it will be seen that the self alone is not quite sufficient to lead us to the door of God. The senses are also designed by our Creator as help-mates to the soul for self-realisation in Him. The sense organs should not therefore be crushed as encumbrances to the soul, as clogs in the wheel of spiritual life, as unfortunately advocated by some religionists, but should be kept under the control of the self with the free will which God has vouchsafed to man.

From the above, it will also be seen that it is not without a definite purpose that God has placed this wonderful soul on the earth. The Rishis announce that every soul is simply a means to an end in the universal plan. Besides there is such a divinely-designed reciprocity between soul

and soul that none can do without another. Just as in the organism of the universe, the minutest satellite is indispensable unto the whole cosmos, so in the realm of the spirit, there is such an intimate inter-linking between soul and soul that for the perfection of any one individual, it is absolutely true none other can be dispensed with. Again, all the universe is one whole and the nearer its parts are to each other, the more intimately they act and react on each other. This applies to human beings no less than to the molecules of the physical universe. This fact of mutual membership involves great sorrows; but it involves also the gladness, happiness and joy that there is in the world. If one man's conduct affected no one but himself, all the beauty and nobility of human life will be sapped at the foundation. The world would not be a colony bound together in fellowship of gladness and sorrow. It would be a vast prison in which each man, woman and child has to serve a life-term of solitary confinement.

God has also stamped upon all men their respective natures and has given them their work and mission. What that mission is, we have to ascertain and ceaselessly endeavour by the use of every faculty given us to work out that purpose. Each man, if he was enlightened, would discover in his life a divine purpose; an object to fulfil, which concerned many more than himself; a greatness and goodness to achieve. He too is a prince of the line. Like Napoleon the Great, he too, is a child of destiny. The teaching of all nature shows that it must be to the end of improvement and upward growth, the increase in real virtue, in knowledge and in wisdom that man has been placed on the earth. Nature again is a silent and instructive preacher. We see the acorn grow into the oak, the maggot into the butterfly, the egg into the bird. The frail water lily has in it the promise of *Victoria Regia*. The wild hedge-rose some day blooms as the full-bosomed queen of the garden. Shall we doubt, then, that the human

soul, the most precious of all objects, is also upon the upward path? Surely, man alone is not destined to a miserable finality—man with all the fire of his unquenchable aspiration. Broadly speaking, the soul's ultimate destiny then is to attain God and His holiness or make progress unto Him. All the compartments of life, the mind, the heart, the soul and the will must advance in the way of truth. In other words, the intellectual, moral and emotional progress of our being is our destiny.

The All-Wise Providence undoubtedly co-operates with the man who faithfully performs his journey and labours to fulfil his destiny not by yielding to a physical necessity or a brute propensity but by exercising free will and independent energy. But the greater the destiny, the greater the opposition to its fulfilment and the greater, therefore, the struggle to overcome it. The record of these struggles is the invaluable history of spiritual experiences of mankind; for, God presides over them and gives them the victory. The history of every victorious life thus forms a chapter in the great scriptures of humanity.

Now coming to our Rishis, they enjoin a life of intense activity for the realisation of man's destiny. It is wrongly believed by some that the Upanishads advocate for attaining salvation a life of seclusive meditation in forests. On the other hand, the Rishis say "*One should wish to live a hundred years here surely by performing duties. Work does not cling to thee, to man when he acts in this manner. There is no other way than this*". (Isopanishad). They teach us that God's nature is made not only of knowledge and power but also of action, that to work we must live and to live we must work. Life and activity are thus inseparably combined. God Himself is ever active in creation. Our life itself in all its varied expressions is an unceasing activity, a continuous manifestation of the Infinite Life, an inscrutable weaving of the threads of destiny by the hands of a loving

Providence. He, the ultimate Reality, is not an inactive consciousness, but an ever-active conscious Person giving away His life every moment in the form of innumerable finite persons and yet remaining Infinite. What can be the motive, the object of His incessant activity? As the Infinite and the Perfect, He can have no want of His own to be satisfied, no good to be realised. Neither can His motive be mere sport or play, for sport or play proceeds, as we see in our own lives, from a desire for enjoyment and hence implies want or vacuity. The motive of God's continuous activity can therefore be nothing but the good of His creatures, creatures who must be supposed as potentially existing in Him as His parts before they are created or manifested as distinct persons as already stated above. Whether we dive with the aid of geology into the bowels of the earth beneath or with the wings of astronomy we soar into the heaven above, we find that the real and ultimate end of God's activity even through His immutable laws is to promote the happiness of His creatures. He is constantly vouchsafing unto our soul noble aspirations and moral strength. That we may increase in knowledge and righteousness and thus grow in strength and blessedness is His eternal intention. To this end, He uses means and employs opportunities at all times and in all climes with a solicitude that nothing can tire and on occasions that none can number. Life and activity are thus inseparably combined in God. The created soul should not therefore slumber but be up and doing in the pilgrimage of life dedicating itself to God through all its activities.

He who thinks of realising God by running away from the world can never expect to meet Him. We must be able to assure ourselves that as in our actions we are realising ourselves, so in ourselves we are realising Him who is the Self of our self. We must aim at the self-realisation of the individual through social service, dedicating our talents and resources not only for our own advancement but also

for the religious, moral, educational, social, political and economic needs of our nation.†

The chief among the knowers of Brahman is defined by the Upanishads as “He, whose *joy* is in Brahman, whose *play* is in Brahman, the active One”. He whose joy is in Brahman cannot live in inaction. His eating and drinking, *his earning of livelihood* and his beneficence constitute his activity in Brahman. As observed by Dr. Rabindranath Tagore, “Just as the joy of the poet in his poem, of the artist in his art, of the brave man in the output of his courage, of the wiseman in the discernment of truths, ever seeks expression in their several activities, so the joy of the knower of Brahman, in the whole of his every day work, little and big, in truth, in beauty, in orderliness and in beneficence, seeks to give expression to the Infinite”. The knower of Brahman is always at work, cares not for the result or name or fame, extends help to others without expectation of gratitude or return. Whether he heals or teaches, prays or contemplates, fasts or watches, rebukes or consoles, suffers or organises, lives or dies, the knower of Brahman is a man of endless action.

I shall now briefly indicate the various stages of spiritual progress of the human soul recognised by the Upanishads.

The *first stage* is that of souls which live a purely animal life following their carnal instincts and impulses and which return immediately after their death to earthly life without going to any higher world. Their destiny is continual going and coming like that of worms and insects.

The *second stage*—the next higher stage is of those who follow the Vedic *Karma Kanda*. Their object is to secure various enjoyments here and hereafter. They are said to reach the region of the gods through the path called *pitrayana*—the way leading to the world of the fathers, and thence, after the reward of their good works has been exhausted come back to a new round of mundane existence.

The third stage—the next higher stage is of those who, following the Vedic Jnanakanda, Monism, qualified or unqualified based on knowledge and the Brahnavada founded on it with its *sadhana*—*nishkama* (disinterested) karma and pure *jnana* and *bhakti*, worship the Supreme Being in spirit and in truth, follow after their death the *devayana* path, the way of the gods, expounded by Raja Rishi Chitra in the Kaushitaki Upanishad and reach *Brahmaloka*, where they live for ever in conscious union with the Supreme Being and never return to earthly life. It is this stage that is believed in by Rishis Prajapati and Indra among others.

The great difference between the two paths is that while those who travel on the *devayana* do not return again to a new life on earth but reach in the end a true knowledge of the unconditioned Brahman, those who pass on to the world of the fathers on the *pitrayana*, return to the earth to be born again and again.

According to the advocates of Unqualified Monism, propounded by the Rishis Uddalaka Aruni and Yagnavalkya among others and followed by the Sankarite School, as already seen in Chapter VIII, the aforesaid third stage is not the final destiny of man but there is a *fourth stage*, the stage of absolute identity with and absorption in the unconditioned Brahman for those who attain complete liberation in this life or in the *Brahmaloka*.

Ramanuja's School of Qualified Monism accepts Chitra's teaching of the third stage as the final destiny of man, as the Rajarishi speaks of no higher goal. According to him, absorption in Brahman would be, if it were at all possible, not the liberation but the utter destruction of the soul. The highest state a finite self can attain to, is a state of absolute holiness and entire likeness to the divine nature and a clear realisation of its dependence on the Infinite.

The followers of Sankara assert that the *Brahmaloka* spoken of by Raja Rishi Chitra must be interpreted as the

world of the lower Brahman—as a state of only relative union with the Supreme Being. In other words, while to Sankara, the *Brahmaloka* is one of those lofty regions where the soul halts on its way to final absorption in God, to Ramanuja, it is the final destination of all souls which have attained the highest enlightenment and purification.

CHAPTER XI.

THE RISHIS' PERCEPTION OF GOD AS SARVANTARYAMI (THE INNER SELF OF ALL) AND SARVAVISVABHARITHA. (THE CONTAINER AND UPHOLDER OF THE WHOLE UNIVERSE.)

The Chandogya Upanishad declares: “*Now that light which shines above this heaven, higher than all, higher than every thing in the highest world, beyond which there are no other worlds, that is the same light which is within man*”. Rishi Yajnavalkya avers in Brihadaranyaka,—“*He is that great unborn Self who consists of knowledge, is surrounded by the Pranas, the ether within the heart. In it there reposes the Ruler of all, the Lord of all, the King of all*”; while the Rishi of the Mundaka Upanishad proclaims: “*This Self, bright and full of light, who exists inside the body and whom sinless devotees see, is always attainable by truth, by discipline, by right knowledge and by Brahmacharya*.”

The Rishis felt in the serene depths of their mind that the same energy which pervades the universe and which vibrates and passes into the endless forms of the world, manifests itself in our inner being as consciousness and there is no break in unity. Just as God pervades and dwells in the outward nature, He also lives in man as the life of his physical form, the presiding Spirit of his mind, heart and soul, in fact as his Higher Self. But as our soul is not obviously identical with the body, though it is immanent in every part and particle of it, so God is not identical with

the objects in nature or with the body of man, though He is immanent in both. Nature and man, as already stated in the previous chapters, are not an illusion or appearance or a deceptive mirage but real in relation to Him. All great forms, inanimate or alive, material or spiritual, in time or in space or in mind, are His shadows. All voices, language, music, the inspired word, the sounds and breathings of nature are His echoes. In fact, the world is His embodiment. Humanity is His incarnation. The best among men are most like Him. At the same time, neither the sublime nature nor the divine lineaments of the best among mankind nor the whole creation itself can give us an exhaustive picture of Him, because He is indescribable and inexhaustible.

Again God, the Supreme Creator, cannot be conceived apart from Himself as the Protector. If the world is real, it is real because of His Divine Power which animates it and constitutes its immanent vitality. Every little child is nourished by its mother. Every tree is sustained by the hidden root. The main-spring causes and sustains the movements of the wheels in every time-piece. The universe, viewed as a vast machinery, God is its Main-spring, a main-spring living in and operating through every part and particle of the whole. The universe, viewed as a mighty tree, 'the eternal banyan tree' as the Kathopanishad describes it, He is its unseen Root, a root drawing the sap, distributing it to every part and vitalising the whole at every point. The universe, viewed as a child, He is the Mother, a mother incessantly pouring the milk of life and strength into all objects and beings.

According to Rishi Svetasvatara,

"That one God is hidden in all things : He is omnipresent and the Inner Self of all. He superintends all work and lives in all beings. He is the witness, the Inspirer, detached and above the gunas. The Inner Self, the Person of the measure of the thumb, lives always in the heart of all ; that giver of wisdom is revealed by the heart and by meditation. They who know Him become immortal. As oil is found in lin-

seeds, butter in curds, water in river-beds (full of sand), so, he who seeks the Self with truth and austerities, finds it in himself. He finds the all-pervading Self who lies hidden as butter in milk, who is obtainable by self-knowledge and austerities and who is described in the Upanishads as the Highest."

The Rishi of the Kenopanishad proclaims:—

"Under whose leading does the understanding go to its objects? Under whose leading does the vital power, the chief of the internal organs, does its work? Under whose leading do people utter these words? and what God leads the eye and the ears to their objects? Verily it is He who is the ear of the ear, the understanding of the understanding, the speech of speech. He is the life of life, the eye of the eye. The wise giving up the error that these organs are the self, become immortal after their departure from this world."

"That which is not revealed by speech, but by which speech is revealed—know that alone to be Brahman, and not this what people worship (i.e., not anything that belongs to the world of objects). That which people do not conceive with the understanding (i.e. the faculty of forming mental images of things), but by which the understanding is conceived as wisemen say—know that alone to be Brahman, and not this what people worship. That which people do not see with the eyes, but that by which people see visual objects—know that alone to be Brahman, and not this what people worship. That which people do not hear with the ears, but that by which the ears are heard, (i.e., known)—know that alone to be Brahman, and not this what people worship. That which people do not smell with the organ of smell, but that by which the power of smelling is led—know that lone to be Brahman, and not this that people worship."

By identifying Brahman with the subject of knowledge, the Upanishads do not make Him either plural or limited. The subject of all knowledge is conceived by them to be one and undivided and identical with Brahman. This is made clear in the eighth Brahmana of the Brîhadaranyaka Upanishad where Yajnavalkya says, as already stated in Chapter VI *supra*:—

"That Brahman, O Gargi, is unseen, but seeing, unheard but hearing, unperceived but perceiving, unknown but knowing. There is nothing that sees but it, nothing that hears but it; nothing that perceives but it, nothing that knows but it. In that Akshara then, O, Gargi, the ether is woven like warp and woof."

What the Rishis mean is that the Supreme Being is not only the Occult Force which nourishes and quickens all the known and undiscovered forces in nature, but also the immanent, hidden energy in every active force operating in our body. For instance, we feel in our arms the measured beat of the pulse; what a mystery! What is it that lies concealed within the fold of our arteries which causes this strange phenomena of pulsation? Is it a dead physical force and nothing more? We feel within our arms a living force, a sustaining power, flowing from Him, keeping up and energising the entire body. Here it is; we see it; we accept it as a fact and an undeniable reality.

Again, as we lay our hand on our heart, we feel a mysterious throbbing and excitement within it. What causes this wonderful upheaving and strange sound? Whence this fresh stream of vital fluid incessantly passing from it through the arteries to the remotest parts of the body? In this forcible propulsion of blood through its natural channels, do we see only blood-force? No. Beneath that force, we feel distinctly His Immanent Presence, His Hand, the Hand of the Living God, plying the machinery of the blood-system in the human body.

Whence comes this breath so essential to our life? Who works this curious respiratory system within our lungs? What makes them breathe? Is it the lungs' own force that makes them inhale and exhale air? Can matter breathe? Is it given to the lungs to breathe? No. Not in their own strength but with a higher power do they give out noxious air and take in such air as brings life and vitality. The lungs do not move; they are moved. Beneath their respiratory agency, their muscular force, is His Living Force that supports the ceaseless activity of the ever-recurring inhalation and exhalation.

Not only in the arms, the heart, the lungs, His Living Energy is actually working in every atom of our body, in

the very lips with which we frame our words of adoration in the very eyes with which we look up to Him for inspiration and guidance.

Though our body, with its encumbrance of bone and muscle, is mere matter, dead and dark, it becomes, when lighted with the light of His Force, His own blessed sanctuary. He is seated therein on His Throne of Glory in the centre of the heart controlling and energising all the muscular and nervous forces that keep up the bodily organism. In the words of the Kathopanishad, He is "*seated as the Adorab in the middle*".

In the dim hoary past when the civilisation of the world was yet in its infancy, the blessed Rishis of this and other Upanishads, illumined by the Spirit, were enabled to perceive His glory and to sing it rapturously, not as the feeble echo of a reported truth, but as the oracular voice of a realised experience. The Rishis declare that the Brahman is the very Inner Soul seated in the hearts of all objects; even as every crystal consists of particles symmetrically clustered round a central axis with its powers of attraction and cohesion; even as in every organism, the centre is the nucleus containing not merely the force around which additions might gather, but also the living, cohering power which draws and holds together all the congenial accretions in the up-growth of the microscopic speck of vital life.

The Supreme Being, now sends forth, with the impulse of His own Spirit, myriads of created objects like sparks from a blazing fire; and again He resumes them into Himself—not to annihilate but to cherish, not to wipe out but to conserve, not to engulf but to regenerate. As the child is but the parent reproduced, as the friend is but the '*alterego*' the other self, as the disciple is but the preceptor rejuvenated, as the harvest is but the seed manifolded, even so, the universe is the offspring—the creation and the harmony of the Supreme Spirit God. He is not a distant driving power

but the ever-present, immediate, inmost vitality. The Supreme Being is the plan and the purpose, the essential and enduring reality, behind this ever-unfolding scene called creation.

When the sages described Him as the *Sarvantharyami* (the Inner Self of all), they did not closet or confine Him at the centre of innumerable ramparts and ramifications, there to be segregated and thus shut out from our daily doings. In all our diversified activities, the Supreme Being precedes us, accompanies us, follows us, hovers over us, encompasses, underlies, permeates us. In the beat of the heart, in the wink of the eye, in the movement of the tongue, in the power of hearing, in the sensitiveness of touch, in the delights of fragrance, in the swing of the limb, in the charms of beauty, in the resolves of the will, in the aspirations of the soul, the Supreme Being is the inspiration, the effectuation, the in-coming impulse, the out-going endeavour, the concluding ratification and the cheering benediction. The patient probings of the searching student, the thrilling raptures of the sensitive artist, the selfless services of the generous philanthropist, the piercing insight of the mystic seer, the dictates of the moral sense, the retributive reproaches of conscience, the endowments of the intellect, the irradiation of genius, the imagination of the poet, the sagacity of the statesman, the self-less labours of the agriculturist or the physician, the inspired wisdom which rears a temple or constructs a parable, in fact all that is true, all that is good, all that is beautiful, all that is beneficent, be it great or small, be it perfect or fragmentary, be it material, or moral,—all originate in, all emerge from, all converge towards, all terminate, in the Supreme Being.

As the centre of a circle is not the point which shows the distance of one part from another, but really that focus from which proceed the countless lines comprised within and constituting the complete circuit, so the Supreme Being is the centre as well as the circumference of the full circle of

life. As the good sovereign on the throne, appar-
 isolated and seemingly detached and unconcerned, is
 the source, the fountain-head, the central sanctum of auth-
 and the sole stay and supreme strength of the realm,
 so, the Supreme Being is seated in the inner core of all cr-
 beings as the ruler and the '*puller*'; and from Him
 up and flows forth all vitalising spirit. He is not the
 ruler that issues orders and lets things have their own]
 He is not the mere teacher who imparts hints to the
 and leaves him to work out the solution ; He is not m
 the skilled artist who sketches the design and expects
 humbler workmen to rear the edifice ; He is not ever
 parent who apportions his or her life to the offspring
 gradually consigns it to its own care. He is the
 present, direct, immediate, personal controlling Po
 All creatures become one in Him as all children become
 in the mother. If brother holds to brother, if sister c
 to sister, if brother and sister embrace each the other,
 all because of their being and becoming one in the mo
 This blessing of the Spirit-Mother makes us all bro
 and sisters—one in Her. As the children in the home bec
 one in the mother, as the disciples in the class become
 in the teacher, as the subjects in the state become o
 the sovereign, we become one in the Lord—not merely
 we become one *for* the Lord, not that we become one *thr*
 the Lord, not that we become one *with* the Lord, but
 we become one *in* the Lord. We are thus pervaded
 environed by the Divine Spirit and fused into one comp
 inseparable, indissolvable brother-hood—not co-operatio
 resources, not division of labour, not contract betw
 mutual help-mates—but unification—complete onene
 in the Spirit, albeit occasionally suppressed by tyra
 enfeebled by indifference, blind-folded by ignorance
 atrophied by insensibility. We are all primarily one,
 cause He has created us one ; we are essentially one, bec

we are moulded of the same substance. We are eternally one, because all are the undying off-spring of one Sire, not merely but integral parts of one stupendous whole.

Seemingly the sovereign-master of the whole system of planets and satellites, the sun is yet the inmate of and the indweller in the tiny body of even the glow-worm and the fire-fly. Even so, the Supreme Being indwells and underlies all. As the different strings of a musical instrument when properly tuned, produce a harmonious sound, which though emanating from many is ultimately and truly one, so He harmonises all in His wisdom. More than this, He unifies them in their ultimate substance and origin. He is the great Unifier. He is the One ultimate Reality, the self-manifested, the self-apportioned but not partitioned substance of all objective phenomena and the inner universal unity of all Reason. He is the complete and everlasting realisation of what we can ever think or be. He is the fulfilment of the best and the highest that we can realise or even conceive at any time. He is the absolutely Perfect one. Hence says Rishi Uddalaka Aruni to his son Swetaketu in the Chandogya Upanishad: "*That which is the subtle essence, in it all that exists has its Self. It is the true; It is the Self and thou, O Swetaketu art it;*" while Aruni's disciple, Rishi Yajnavalkya, further elaborates this truth in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad in these words:—"*He who dwells in all beings and within all beings, whom all beings do not know, whose body all beings are and who pulls (rules) all beings within, he is thy self, the puller (ruler) within, the immortal.*"

This conception of God as the inspiring Spirit, as the director of the human understanding, was formed and universally accepted at least as early as every twice-born Hindu began to utter as his daily devotion the *Gayatri mantra*, which is more fully dealt with in Chapter XIV *infra*, in which God is described as "*Dhiyo yo nah prachodayat*"—"He who directs our powers of understanding", and the same truth is

repeated in a beautiful *mantra* in the *Svetasvātara Upanishad*:—
*“ Verily the Person, i.e., the Supreme Being, is the great Lord ;
 he is the sole director of the heart ; he is the dispenser of this
 holy state, and he is the inexhaustible light.”*

The above conception of God proclaimed by our Rishis several thousands of years ago and which is the predominant feature of the Upanishads, has begun to dawn only recently on western philosophers and is called “the immanental conception” in the modern philosophical language. Referring to this conception, Dr. Deussen, the famous German Vedantist, says—“For the first time the original thinkers of the Upanishads, to their immortal honour, found the solution of the great riddle of life, when they recognised our Atman, our inmost individual being, as the Brahman, the inmost being of Universal nature and of all her phenomena.”

From the above, it will be seen that our own individual self is a strange combination of the great and the small, the finite and the Infinite, the individual and the Universal. It is because the Supreme Being exists in us as our Higher Self, that we can transcend our individuality, can know truths beyond our individual life, can acquire universal truths and can hold communion with Him. We can with more or less ease discount the five sheaths in which our individuality is encased, in thinking of the facts of the world and realise ourselves as unchangeable witnesses of the universe and our commerce with it as individuals and changeable intelligences. A merely finite being, a mere individual, far from knowing any other higher truths, cannot even know that He is finite and individual. But one, who has known himself to be finite and individual, has, in knowing this much, transcended his finality and individuality. In other words, a mere finite mind could not know either itself or the world, but in knowing the limitations of space and time,

the individual self knows itself to be above them. This reveals the existence in man of a marvellous power and inclination to enfold within one bracket, the past, the present and the future and thus to employ our time-conception as one continuous background to picture forth the onward march of the race. In doing this, man, as it were, transcends time. Man can collect into one day, into one moment, all the seemingly separate experiences, all the apparently isolated incidents, of a long duration of time. And in this he shows the capacity to rise beyond time, to outreach the bounds of time. And this capacity vindicates itself as regards not only months and years but also centuries and ages. The ever-accumulating records of history and the ever-expanding researches of science bear testimony to this fact that unto man is given the privilege freely to outstep time. Here is one characteristic in which man is shown to be akin to God, the Author of time, who is yet above its limitations. We are not therefore merely finite individuals. The finite and the Infinite, individuality and universality are inseparably blended in us as supplements to each other.

At the same time, we should bear in mind that God is not prior to man as his predecessor, the latter being an emanation from the former; but He is conceptually prior, that is, as cause to effect, not temporally prior, that is in time. If we take hold of this fundamental difference between conceptual and temporal, priority and succession, we see, as observed by Brahma Rishi Venkata Ratnam, how these cannot go together. God and man are essentially one. Yet God and man stand as supplements to each other, as already stated above. Hence, when we come to utterances like "*Aham Brahmasmi*", it is not the phenomenal *aham* that says it. For what right has this little mote of the phenomenal '*I*' to say, 'I am God'? The proper formula is, "*Aham Brahmasmi*" and not "*Brahmahamasmi*". That which is the core and kernel of our life and which, being

indestructible, survives the phenomenal and temporal, that is the Divine Essence in us. They are not different in essence ; yet we are different in necessity from the Supreme Soul, the Soul of ours. We should not be able at all to think of and think of God and we did not stand apart in conception *per-contra*, if there were no oneness between God and Soul. Thus conceptually, there is difference, but essentially there is none between *Jeeva* and *Siva*. If we grasp this truth there is little ground for the fear that no synthesis exists between monism and dualism.

Herein lies the key to the oft-repeated affirmation of the identity of man to God, to utterances like *I am he*, *Aham Brahmasmi*, I am Brahman, *Ayamasi*, this self is Brahman, *Tat tvam asi*, Thou art that. *masi* means according to Ramanuja "You cannot be without God—God is your Self, that is that on which you exist for your existence and your activity". The idea in this famous text lies, according to him, not between the Universal and the individual self but between the Universe and the Self of the individual self. It is that the word '*that*' points to the Brahman who is the cause, who wills the truth and who is the cause of all, and that the word '*thou*' which is equated with it points forth the Brahman whose body is the individual self. The most unqualified Monism contains an element of duality, however obstinately it may try to ignore it. In the equation "*So ham*":—"He is I" or "I am He" this equation would be as impossible without duality as without unity. The '*He*' and '*I*' are Brahman in different moods of forms, the Universal and the individual. If the difference of the moods of forms is ignored, then the equation that is to say, Monism as a doctrine of spirituality becomes impossible. The state of supreme illumination in which the unity of God and man is perceived,

the world of manifestation, and being distinguished from the eternal self-knowledge of the transcendent Brahman, implies difference as well as unity. But this difference, it may be said, yields at best only a religion of contemplation, one that is confined to a meditative realisation of the unity of God and man ; it cannot yield a religion of fervent devotion and practical usefulness.

The substance of the same truth has been differently expressed by Dr. Rabindranath Tagore thus :—

“ He, the *Amritam*, the Immortal Bliss, has made Himself into two. Our soul is the loved one; it is His other self. We are however separate. But if this separation were absolute, then there would have been absolute misery and unmitigated evil in this world. Our individual soul has been separated from His Supreme Soul, but this has not been from alienation but from the fulness of love. It is for that reason that untruths, sufferings and evils are not a stand-still ; the human soul can defy them, can overcome them, nay, can altogether transform them into new power and beauty.”

From the foregoing, it will be seen that the Rishis perceived vividly the supreme truth, viz., “*The self coming out of the Self and ranging forth as the self and coming back into the Self to be the Eternal Self*” and proclaimed this mysterious process as the divine purpose of creation—a process which construes the complete cycle of cosmic life as a four-fold self-presentation of the Deity as the Progenitor, the Protector, the Perfector and the Perpetuator. In other words, they announce that the Transcendental is unthinkable except as the self-revealing Creator and man is incomprehensible save as the transparent handiwork of the Creator. The Universal Self can therefore be truly known only when He manifests Himself in the individual. Just as the sun is inconceivable devoid of light and colour and colour cannot be thought of apart from the seeing eye, even so God and man are inconceivable except in relation to each other.

Sage Emerson of America expresses the same sentiment when he says :

" The Universal does not attract us until housed in an individual. The ocean is everywhere the same but it has no character until it is bounded by the shore or the ship. Who would value any number of Atlantic brine bounded by lines of latitude and longitude if it were not for the fact that it is filled with expression; and the point of greatest interest is where land and water meet."

So must we admire in man His Form, the Form of the Universal, the concentration of His divine lineaments. His beauty and glory, His beauty and holiness are more clearly manifest in the human form and the human face than in all the forms around—the form which breathes forth purity and life, the face which beams with love. How winning is the look of the virtuous ! How elevating the mere sight of the saintly ! In one word, man, who is the most mysterious product of evolution, the glory and crown of creation, the magic mirror in which He, the Great Charmer, reflects His own otherwise unknowable and unrealisable beauty and love and holiness. This means that God creates us, because he needs us, because He loves us, because we are necessary in the economy of His nature, even for His own self-maintenance. This truth also finds an echo in the Muslim scriptures. According to a verse in the Koran, God is represented as saying " Mohammed, we have created Thee for ourself. What is true, of course, with unquestionable clearness, regard to the prophet and the sage, is true also in regard to the obscure and the unilluminated—that God has created each one of us for Himself. Aye, not only has He brought us into being, not only is He keeping daily, hourly, momentary watch over each one of us, but he is really, truly perfecting each one for Himself. Thus the life given to each one of us, even as it is a gift from God, retains within itself and is ever blessed with the immanence, the presence of the God Himself.

Again, take the case of a river. The moment the fountain-head has formed into the river, the river has no choice or option but is under an internal impulse, an innate compulsion, to go on and on, its very flow being the chant—"I am of the ocean and I must make for the ocean." It has no place in this world, no purpose in creation, unless it flows on always and with unfailing certainty towards the ocean and until it falls into, and fulfils itself, in the ocean. If obstacles and hindrances come in the way, it just ignores them. Where it can, it passes over them; and where it cannot, it still keeps flowing on by the side. The river that does not keep its course unchecked in singleness of purpose, loses itself and becomes a pool which must sooner or later be either absorbed into the atmosphere or condemned to remain a stinking pool. A river, to be a river, must flow on. If it brings invaluable blessings to the countries through which it passes, that is all only as a part, as an incident, of its being, not as its end. The end is to flow into the ocean—not to be lost in it but to find itself in it. Likewise, each child of God has been designed for God Himself, is being shaped with the purpose of fulfilling His love and has to keep marching along here and hereafter, that he or she might perfect his or her being in complete identification with Him in love and holiness. Otherwise, our life becomes purposeless and the truth that God has created us for His own delight, to reflect His own beauty, love and holiness and that He resides in our hearts, as proclaimed by the Rishis, becomes meaningless.

From what has been stated in the preceding paragraphs in regard to the immediate presence and immanence of God in man, it follows that it is He and He alone that reveals Himself to us in every act of perception or knowing as the only concrete Reality, as the Subject-Object, as the Indivisible Spirit who distinguishes Himself from the object and at the same time comprehends it within the sphere of His consciousness. He is not therefore a mere subjective Spirit

confined to the body, but He exists in every object that we know. When knowing objects, we know Him who is both subject and object, who is both subjective and objective, who is our own self and the Self of the universe. In other words, in every act of our perception, we know Him in one aspect as our own self, as our individual self, as *Vijnanatma*, a subjective-self, distinct in each individual, using our bodies and senses and identified with our individual thoughts and feelings; and in another aspect, we realise Him as *Viswatma*, the One, Indivisible, Objective, Universal Self, unembodied and diffused in or containing the whole world. Accordingly, it is He, the Universal Self, that in every act of our perception appears with a part of the universe as our individual self. We, as individuals, lose our acquired knowledge moment after moment. But He, the Absolute, exists in us as the support of ourselves, brings back to us knowledge, combining it with fresh knowledge, increasing our knowledge of the world and confirms our belief in the world as a permanent assemblage of sensuous objects.

Again, a close enquiry into the nature of knowledge and belief discloses the fact that in conceiving and believing the universe as permanent, connected and one, we realise our own self as permanent, as the connecting principle and as one. The truth that the world is permanent, connected and one means this and nothing else—that the selves who at first sight appear to be many and independent of one another and of the world are essentially one and constitute an indivisible unity and form the support of the world.

From what has been stated above, it will be seen that the Supreme Being is, according to the Rishis, not merely a transcendental existence, an intellectual abstract, an unconditional and undifferenced Absolute—an Absolute above space, time, sense and intellect, quality and quantity, attribute and substance, cause and effect—without any relation to anything in space and time, sense and intellect, anything

admitting of quality and quantity, attribute and substance, anything under the law of cause and effect. He is the True Concrete Absolute Being, the Objective Self—the World Soul—with an infinitely differentiated content of knowledge, a Personal and Living Reality. In Him both nature and finite souls have a distinct though subordinate and relative place in unity with, yet different from Him. He is the Immanent Spirit enveloping the Universe, the Glorious Omnipresence of which nature is the fitting temple. The Universe is, as it were, His live-garment woven at the loom of time to half reveal and half conceal as through a translucent veil the Adorable In-dweller. His Immaculate Essence abides in the great golden recesses of the soul. But the soul knows Him not, though He, every moment, enlivens, inspires and intoxicates it; though He does, every moment of eternal time, work out the purposes of reporting Himself, re-producing Himself, re-affirming Himself, re-incarnating Himself through the whole Universe, through every mote and monad, through every atom and animalcule. He is one and at the same time many and yet different from them. He is the Subject continually supporting the objects. He is the Eternal ceaselessly producing change. He is the Infinite ever sustaining the finite. Objects, changes, limits, finite selves eternally exist in Him as powers, properties or manifestations.

Again, the Supreme Being is not merely the Almighty power which pervades the material universe but the Light that illumines the head, the Love that quickens the heart, the guidance that directs the conscience, the Holiness that sanctifies the soul. He is not a distant and disinterested God, who, after bringing the world into being by His fiat and imparting to it sundry qualities and properties by which it works, has veiled Himself after having enunciated laws and disclosed them to certain receptive minds. He is not an unconcerned divinity, who, after creating the universe,

not as a random conglomerate of ill-assorted contents, as an ordered, articulated, harmonised cosmos, left itself and went to sleep behind the clouds, confining His action to stray visits. He is not, as Carlyle satirises the deistic conception, "*an absentee God sitting idle ever since the sabbath at the outside of His Universe and seeing it go.*" He is not a mere impelling force, a mere-sustaining power, who propels the course of planets and evolves the growth of mountains, which reveals itself in lightning, announces it in thunder, treads on the world in earthquakes, who rushes down in torrents and rolls forth in floods. He is not a mere Maker or Supporter or Ruler of the Universe, not a mere Mechanic or Mender, but *the Indwelling Glory, all the objects of all thoughts. He is the Pillar-like one in whom all worlds, all creatures are held*, as the Atharva Veda proclaims.

An absent Deity governing the universe from outside is a fiction. A self-moving universe is an unrealised and unrealisable dream of sceptical minds. The Rishis looked upon God not as outside but as inside the Universe, not as having once for all created the Universe and then confined His action to occasional interferences, but as continuously creative from the first till now; not as having set up certain laws of nature as substitutes for His own action or certain forces other than His own Will-Force, so as to save Himself all further trouble and labour, but as Himself energising the forces of nature, so that the laws of nature are only the habits of His own activity. The universe is not a machine wound up and set going once for all. It is, on the contrary, like a plant which is never cut off from the forces that vitalise it, but is always drawing on them and transfusing them into its life and substance at every part and at all times. The Rishis conceived His divine force or energy not as applied to one end of the machine as when a man turns the handle or works a treadle, but as flowing equably through every vein and nerve of the whole mass, as the sap pulsates

in every vesicle of the great tree. They realised the Universe as a living organism—an organism of which God Himself is the in-dwelling life and vitalising power, which cannot exist for one moment without Him; an organism in which His Divine Will and Wisdom need resort to no contrivance such as that of an artisan who makes a watch and who, to get over difficulties, has to hit upon a plan for making the hands go round on account of their natural inertness. According to them, the universe is a living organism in which His Divine Will and Wisdom, move evenly and steadily onward from the beginning through all times towards the ever higher and higher purpose that is to be. There is not a single object, not a single creature, not an inch of space which is not protected by Him. Should He, the Central Force, remain inactive, even unwary creation disappears in a moment. A mighty and overwhelming deluge sweeps off the length and breadth of the universe. The glory and beauty of all created works vanishes for ever into that primeval nothingness from which they came. He is therefore not only *Sarwantaryami* but also *Sarwa Viswabharitha* containing within Himself the world of time and space, to which our conceptions of sense and intellect, quality and quantity, substance and attribute, cause and effect apply, and like the light of the reviving sun, like the breath of balmy breezes, like the joy of vernal showers, pervades, encompasses, protects and perfects all.

Now we shall be able to realise how the Supreme Being, the One all-investing and all immanent Life, the One marvellous Presence, the One Universal, detaches and apportions Himself into countless individuals and again and often reunites these into the same spirit, into the same undifferented humanity all the world over, as it were, into an identity of thought, heart and aspiration, and how He is the ultimate common background of all finite selves, the underlying unity of consciousness, binding the world into a homogeneous

whole. He has therefore made it possible for us, circumscribed as we are, to know the different feelings of different minds. That our thoughts and feelings agree with the thoughts and feelings of another mind, that we are moved by the same processes, can only mean that He is the underlying consciousness of us all, the eternal ground of our being, binding us together and making us dance to the same tune.

Accordingly, we participate in the gnomic wisdom imparted by the oracular voice of the sage Emerson of America, although his and our mental phenomena are numerically different. The sense of the sublime and the beautiful, the unutterable love that breathes in the poems of Wordsworth, the priest and prophet of nature, the sentiment that pervades the songs of Tennyson, the poet of trust and hope, that moves our hearts and make them thrill with the same exalted feelings. The same hymn of praise that transported the souls of the ancient sages of India to the glory of a felicitous presence of God uplifts our souls also and keeps us in spiritual communion with them.

In the same way, the unreserved self-resignation of *Job*, the lofty monotheism and the large-hearted tolerance of *Zoroaster*, the profound meditation of *Buddha*, the piety of *Confucius*, the deep wisdom of *Socrates*, the inspiring ethical dialogues of *Plato*, the enlightening philosophy of *Aristotle*, the living faith and unparalleled self-sacrifice of *Jesus*, the vision of the One Living God of prophet *Mahamud*, the self-effacing devotion of *Moulana Rumi*, the universal brotherhood of *Guru Nanak*, the inebriating love, the dance and trance of *Chaitanya*, draw our souls and bind us in deep spiritual relationship to these great souls, far as they are from one another in time and space.

CHAPTER XII.

THE RISHIS' CONCEPTION OF THE THREE STATES OF THE INDIVIDUAL SELF ; WAKEFULNESS, OBLIVION AND SLEEP.

To the transcendental truth of the Immanence of God in the human soul explained in the preceding chapter, the Rishis adduce irrefutable testimony from the phenomena of wakefulness, oblivion and sleep which constitute the three states of our daily existence.

Chapter IV of the *Prasnopanishad* deals with the mystery of the sleeping and waking states, how all senses and objects of sense as well as all finite intelligences are merged in the hours of dreamless sleep in the Universal Self immanent in us which is described as the resting place of all finite souls. It is evident from Rishi Pippalada's teachings that our self-consciousness with consciousness of objects through which it realises itself is not lost in sleep. If the self lost consciousness in sleep, sleep for it would be veritable death and waking veritable re-birth—a fresh commencement of conscious life. The very fact, then, that waking is waking and not re-birth, that is, not the fresh commencement but the restoration of all those we were conscious of before going to sleep, shows conclusively that in sleep we lose neither our self-consciousness nor consciousness of objects.

According to the Rishi of the *Kenopanishad*, in our waking state, it is "*He who is the ear of the ear, the understanding of the understanding, the speech of speech, the life of life, the eye of the eye*", that makes us see, hear, smell, taste and touch which are all spiritual phenomena, contact of individual soul with the Supreme Soul. It is only He who is within our soul and in whose hand our soul is that can produce these phenomena. In what is called our waking state, we, as finite individuals, are not fully awake. What we know at a particular moment disappears from us the next

moment, so that the major part of what we know in the present state remains in the background of our consciousness. When the world as a whole or any part of it reappears to us after its temporary disappearance, it testifies to its identity. This identity of the past and the present, what was formerly known and what is known at the present moment, is based on the identity and eternality of the knowers self. When objects temporarily absent from our field of consciousness reappear to us, they prove themselves to have existed all the while we were unaware of them in the background of the Self which we call our own. This unmistakably proves that the ultimate Self who indwells us as our Higher Self is not finite but beyond the limitations of time and place and comprehends every thing. If the Supreme Being were a mere abstract unity without difference, a mere substratum without objects related to Him, if the objective world were a mere flux and not a permanent reality, experience, unity of part and whole, of past and present, would be impossible.

Likewise in oblivion, *i.e.*, in our forgetful state, though the knowledge of the past leaves our finite, and forgetful mind and disappears from our individual life, it reappears in the form of memory and recollection, which is not possible without a union of the past and the present, and discloses its own imperishableness. On the one hand, we are forgetful and are now and then forgetting almost everything connected with our life; on the other hand, there is in the background as the eternal support of our life, as our very consciousness, the Supreme Self who forgets nothing and who brings back forgotten things to us, when they are needed. If He did not remain in us holding for us the knowledge of the past, our life would be quite impossible, and there would be no such thing as experience. Life without memory is not life, and consciousness without remembrance is no consciousness.

The coming back of the past unmistakably proves that the past is not ultimately past but really ever present in Him, the ultimate Self, however ignorant the finite self may be of it. This fact also unmistakably proves a distinction between God and the finite. Far and near, past, present and future, are indeed facts of the finite self and facts to God also as constituting the life of the finite. But He rises above these limitations and comprehends them all. To Him, nothing is far and nothing past or future. To Him everything is near and everything ever present. Wakefulness, oblivion, dreaming and dreamless sleep are not His states but those only of the finite self. He is ever-waking, ever-knowing, all-knowing, all-comprehensive. In Him, all things and beings exist for ever and nothing really perishes.

In sound sleep in which we become wholly unconscious, utterly inert and inactive and lose knowledge, memory, understanding, power, in fact every conscious factor of our life, the Supreme Self in us, whose transcendental consciousness we share, is ever wakeful and watchful. The re-appearance of our self-consciousness and object-consciousness after sleep proves beyond doubt that though in the hours of sound sleep, they do not appear in our individual life, they are not then destroyed but remain intact in the Supreme Self—"with all the senses, the vital powers and the elements," as the Rishis say. When we are fast asleep, He remains wakeful and holds in His hand our entire conscious life and at the termination of sleep re-manifests Himself as our individual consciousness and thereby makes us awake. It is this which makes possible the identity of both our self-consciousness and object-consciousness—in fact our entire experience.

From the foregoing it will be seen that there exist in the self two aspects or strata in the matter of forgetting and remembering, of things going out of mind and coming back to it. In one of them, there are both forgetting and re-

membering, but in the other, there is no forgetting. If there were forgetting in the latter, the fact of remembrance—coming to mind again—would be impossible. These two forms or strata of the self are popularly called the individual self and the Absolute Self—*Vijnanatma* and *Viswatma*, as we have already seen in the previous chapter. The individual self forgets things and remembers them. The Absolute forgets nothing. These two forms are not separate, not absolutely distinct from each other. They are not also absolutely one. The distinction between the two is more or less subtle and not easy to discern on account of their overlapping tendencies. Broadly speaking, we may say that in our perception of nature, we realise the universal aspect of the Self. We then see that it is God's Own Absolute Self, the support of the Universe. When, on the other hand, we abstract as much as we can from our knowledge of nature and attend specially to self-consciousness, we realise that it is finite individual self.

Should God exist in us only as an undifferentiated Absolute without finite selves distinct from Him, there would be no such thing as oblivion. However, oblivion in its full form is seen in dreamless sleep, when the individual self forgets everything; but it is awake again and gradually remembers all it had forgotten. This would be impossible if He, the sleepless Absolute, did not exist in it. The individual reawakes from sleep only because the Absolute in Him never sleeps. Rishi Pippalada explains the above idea thus

“When he (the dreaming self) is overpowered by light, this person does not dream; then this happiness (that of dreamless sleep) arises in the body. Here is an example of that; as, my dear, birds take shelter in a tree for rest, so all that rests in the Supreme Self. Things are earth and its subtle element, the eyes and what is visible, the nose and what can be smelt, the sense of taste and what can be tasted, the skin and what is tangible, speech and what can be spoken, the hands and what can be handled, the sexual organ and what can be enjoyed, the organ of excretion and what can be given out, the

and what can be travelled over, the sensorium and what is perceptible, the intellect and what is intelligible, egoity and what can be made its object, imagination and what can be imagined, light and what can be illumined, *prana* (vitality) and what can be supported by it. Verily, this person (the individual self) who is the seer, the hearer, the smeller, the taster, the perceiver, the thinker, the agent, who has knowledge for his essence,—he rests in the Supreme Undecaying Self."

Again in dreamless sleep, that marvellous anasthesia under which He, the Divine Mother, places each one of us night after night,—sleep in which all life is drawn into and closetted with what is mysteriously termed 'subliminal consciousness', but the spell vanishing at dawn, leaving no nauseating after-effects,—our individuality or rather the manifestation of individual life, suffers a partial suspense. The wave which constituted it returns to the ocean. In the language of the Upanishads, as already stated above, "*The individual rests in the Supreme undecaying Self. He becomes united with the true; he is gone to his own self.*" In other words :—

"The intelligent person (*purusha*) having through the intelligence of the senses (*pranas*) absorbed within himself all intelligence, lies in the ether which is in the heart. When he takes in these different kinds of intelligence, then it is said that the man sleeps (*svapiti*). Then the breath is kept in, speech is kept in, the ear is kept in, the eye is kept in, the mind is kept in. As birds take shelter in a tree for rest, so all that rests in the Supreme Self."

Nothing proves more clearly our entire dependence on God and the vanity of our vaunted freedom than this, our utterly helpless condition. We, as individuals, sleep in His Bosom, thereby showing clearly that we remain at His absolute mercy and that what we take pride in as our self-consciousness is not our individual property, but His bounty in respect of which we are, to use the words of Emerson, "*mere pensioners*". The contents of our individual life are, however, during this suspense, maintained in tact, by His mercy, in all their fulness and distinctness in His all-comprehending conscious-

ness. There is no loss, no mingling. When the time comes each of us starts up from his Bosom, the Bosom of the Ever-waking Mother, with his wealth of conscious life diminished and his identity undimmed. Every one gets back what was his own and nothing but his own. In awakening, in the language of the Upanishads, "*as the self comes out with its thread or as small sparks come forth from fire, thus do all senses, all worlds, all devas, all beings, all come forth from that Self.*" It looks therefore that there are undoubtedly separate invisible chambers in His Eternal Bosom for each one of us to rest unmolested and sleep undisturbed. In other words, in sleep and such other conditions in which consciousness (in the individual form) is temporarily suspended, what actually takes place is, that the eternal ever-waking Consciousness ceases to reveal itself through the organs of knowledge (*jnanendriyas*). Its reappearance on waking as our consciousness with all its wonderful wealth of knowledge proves conclusively that while we, as individuals sleep, the Life and Light of our being is awake and present in Him all that we know, all that we are—through Him.

It will also be seen from what has been stated above that our individual self is not self-sustained but of necessity must live, move and have its very being in the Supreme Self, in His bottomless and boundless ocean of consciousness in all conditions of its existence, however blind it may be to this sublimest of truths.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE RISHIS' PERCEPTION OF GOD AS SPECIALLY MANIFESTED IN A FEW CHOSEN OR ELECTED WORLD'S WORTHIES, CALLED MAHATMAS.

Besides His Exalted in-dwelling as *Sarvantharyami* in the soul of each and every one of us—that soul which is the highest agency for the manifestation of divinity and

the reflection of His sublimest moral attributes, being the most complete in intellectual simplicity, in ethical purity, in consecrated goodness, the Supreme Being manifests Himself in a special manner from age to age through those who are known as *Elected Men*—through a host of His chosen messengers—an unbroken succession of prophets and philanthropists, to awaken the dormant senses of man to his birth-right, his God-given heritage, to be recognised and blessed as the son of God. Says the Rishi of the *Kathopanishad*. “The Self is attainable by Him alone whom it chooses for self-manifestation. This Self reveals its body *i.e.*, its nature to him”. The Rishi of the *Mundaka Upanishad* echoes the same truth when he declares “He (the Self) is obtained by him alone whom He elects. To him this Self reveals His own nature.” Thus, in His measureless mercy and boundless grace, the Supreme Being does, in all lands and at all times, reveal Himself through *Elected Souls* (Mahatmas) as the Divinity that shapes the ends of mankind. As the sages of the world, Mahatmas are the crystals through which His light passes to the larger humanity; as the prophets of the world, they are the bringers of His mercy; as the toilers of the world, they are the caterers and purveyors of His benevolence; as the sorrowing and suffering ones of the world, they are the vindicators of His compassion; as the leaders of the world, they are the finger marks, the index-fingers of His wisdom. Human history correctly construed is accordingly one continuous narration of the marvellous doings of His Divine Grace through untold channels for the perfection of humanity into His Holy Image.

History is pre-eminently a revelation of God; for, nowhere, perhaps, are the wisdom and goodness of a Divine Providence so manifest as in the apt and timely investment of talents and virtues in the accomplishment of its mysterious dispensations. In the brilliant deviation of a solitary soul from the rank corruption of its age and land; in the enthusiastic life of a patriot who saves a sinking state and

resuscitates its shattered energy ; in the glorious an awe-inspiring prophet who recalls a wandering God's lawful ways and truth ; the thoughtful s history reads a lesson far more instructive and i than all that sages can teach. There, amidst t drums and the blare of trumpets, despite carnage truction, he discerns His plan which has been piloting the world towards justice, righteousness ; There he distinctly perceives that the current of not a sport of chance but that "through the increasing purpose runs" and that an all-guidi has been incessantly writing the grand epic of our :

These *Mahatmas*, as for instance, the univer and revered Mahatma Gandhi, appear in the work according to the needs of the times to carry out Go missions. They are made of the very same spirit as ordinary men. They display but in an imn larger degree the very same reality, the very s in human flesh varying only in its strength and luminosity and distinctness of manifestation. but the mountain peaks built on the lower strata c folk. What is, in the case of innumerable in common life, *i.e.*, in the case of ordinary men, the "anonymous beings of the human species," exhi less striking manner, becomes a ravishment in tl of these remarkable persons. The apprehensio divine truths by these Mahatmas is more penet keener than by others and that which we only a when it is suggested to us, they apprehend, in t of their insight and introspection, without human s They are singularly brilliant manifestations of E Light which all men in some degree reflect and coming the flesh, the world and the self, they r height of accomplishing His super-human purposes words, Mahatmas exèmplify in their lives the plain

the existence of the divine in humanity and proclaim that man, obeying the laws of his being and fulfilling his destiny in goodness and greatness of character, is the highest revelation of God who is the unseen life and law of all things. We should not lose sight of the fact that whatever divinity there was in them is but a special instance of the general truth, that all humanity is divine and that God's revelation, whatever its extent and clearness in them, is the individual case of the universal fact that all humanity is a revelation of God, clear and beautiful and strong, as men are good and holy.

Mahatmas are only supermen but not supernatural. They are no deviations from the established laws of nature. They are perfectly natural phenomena. Like comets, they move in eccentric orbits. As the course of comets seems irregular when compared with the movements of planets, so does the career of Mahatmas when compared with that of ordinary men. Even the way-ward comets have orbits of their own which are perfect and regular in themselves. A comet, however strange its way seems to us, is as much a natural phenomenon as any planet and the movements of both are regulated by the same ruling Hand of God. Similarly, a Mahatma, however uncommon and eccentric and different from other men, is guided by the same unalterable laws of God.

Mahatmas appear when and where they are needed. Their birth is always the result of a deep irrepressible moral necessity. The circumstances of the age foretell their birth. They possess a representative character. They represent their country and age and specific ideas. For instance, Chaitanya the prophet of love and faith, once the scorning Saul of the Vaishnavas, regenerated by Divine Grace into the enthusiastic St. Paul of Vaishnavism, appeared in Bengal when needed and by precept and example, exerted mighty influence to suppress the immoral orgies and the bacchanalian revelry of the Shakti worshippers.

illustrious predecessors—mighty souls that have so richly dowered India with truth and goodness by their holy careers—were mostly sages, a few philanthropists, some patriots. But Rammohan Roy was the first greatest nation-builder that India has produced. In his career is illustrated the harmonious play of that cycle of forces which by their conjoint operation evolve and shape out a modern nation. Verily, he is the Father of Modern India; he is the Rishi of the modern age. He can rightly claim his descent from the ancient Rishis and his theistic dispensation can claim for itself a source as far-reaching as the R̥ig-Veda. In Dr. Rabindranath Tagore's judgment, the most momentous fact of modern days is this, that the West has met the East. Rammohan Roy inaugurated this *rapprochement*. In himself the Rajah vindicated the greatness of the East to the West. He was not only (to use Prof. Sir M. William's language) "the first earnest-minded investigator of the Science of comparative religion that the world has produced", but also (as Prof. Max. Muller put it), "the first to complete a connected life-current between the East and the West—the inspired Engineer in the world of faith that cut the channel of communication, the spiritual Suez, between sea and sea land-locked in the rigid sectarianism of exclusive revelation, and set their separate surges of national life into one mighty world current of universal humanity." In the words of one of his devoted followers, Brahmarishi Venkataratnam, "*Rammohan Roy was the descendant of the Rishis, the disciple of Jesus, the ardent worshipper of the "One only without a second", the first arch—the earliest Colossus that spanned the East and the West, the passionate devotee of freedom, the sorrowing friend of the hereaved, the dauntless champion of the oppressed, the merry companion of children, the safe councillor of statesmen, the proto-type of the coming race where man's soul shall be the mirrored miniature of the world*".

Again in our country, in the second half of the eighteenth century, when knowledge was confined to a microscopic circle, when the spirit of the medieval religious revival was exhausted or transformed into domineering militarism, when meaningless ceremony usurped the place of religion, when superstition elbowed out reason; when the sense of the Supreme God was dissipated into a myriad pantheistic races set themselves against one another in mortal hostility; when caste distinctions were accentuated into haughtiness, when servility and natural feelings were atrophied by moral practices; when morality was fossilised into unthinking custom; when kingdoms were set up and blown down like bubbles; when and victories celebrated by devastation or forced conversions; when rights in property were arbitrary and interference between men and men was forbidden by insecurity; when this ancient land was in the very throes of a huge tribulation with limb torn from limb, hand raised against hand, heart turning away from heart; when, above all, the glory of India, laid low in the dust by the sheer exhaustion of internal division and strife, by social and religious tyranny that not merely tolerated but exalted among other things an inhuman practice of suttee (the burning alive of widows on the funeral pyre of their husbands) cried for a great reformer, unifier, re-invigorator; Raja Rammohan Roy appeared to recall her to God's righteous ways, to cheer up her drooping spirits into hopeful service and focus her shattered energies into a united strength in diverse branches, covering the whole area of national life.

In other words, side by side with his social, educational, religious, reform-activities, Rammohan Roy strove hard for the political amelioration of his countrymen and in fact he was the first Indian to sow the seeds of India's future political independence. He is the father of a new race of Indian heroes, the foremost of the Universalists of the nineteenth century. He heralds a new epoch in Indian history.

Again, in His inscrutable weaving of the destiny of nations, Merciful Providence had ordained to be the political Prayag of the world—the sacred the congruent confluence of the mighty world East and West—of the joy and the strength through a lasting, vital harmony of intellect and will, knowledge and power. A vaster and more comprehensive synthesis had hitherto been realised—had hitherto been impossible—had to be attempted in the present reverent garnering of “the wisdom of the East and West” for the peace of the world; a holy communion, a politician and reformer, sage and prophet of truth, love and goodness. Besides, Mother India, felt the degradation under an alien government, and groaned for political and economic independence. At the dawn of a new chronological epoch, Mahatma Gandhi appeared in the social and religious arena with his versatile and varied qualities, as the hero of a hundred fights, emancipated the foreign yoke, espoused the cause and ameliorated the conditions of the oppressed and depressed *Harijan* and drew them to his bosom in the spirit of Buddha and laid down his own precious life in the accomplishment of his divinely-ordained mission of bringing about unity between the Hindus and the Muslims of India. The top-most mountain-peak cannot approach the height of this towering spiritual genius; the lowest depth cannot fathom the profound experience of this heaven-inebriated son of God. All glory to Him who vouchsafed to India this thrice blessed soul. The emancipated spirit rest in eternal peace in the bosom of the Divine Mother! We do also trust that the future of eternity will endure and abide in Him that emanated His own Holy Spirit which took form and dwelt amicably in the saintly career of our venerated Mahatma! May the

sanctified life be reproduced in an ever-increasing cloud of witnesses unto His glory !

The mind of a Mahatma is a very sensitive organism in God's creation. A keen conscience and refined emotions far in advance of the times are two of the most striking characteristics of the worthies of the world, not to mention their selflessness, their sincerity, the originality of their wisdom, the depth of their vision, their invincible power. To dance to the whims and fancies of the world, to gain cheap reputation by the suppression of the right is humiliation and horror to them. The world may rage, friends and foes may scheme against his life ; but the Mahatma will not swerve from his conviction ; he cannot forego his love for truth. Dead to self, Mahatmas are ever alive to the woes and sufferings of the world. Tears rush into their eyes, their hearts sink within them at the very sight of what the world looks at and passes by. They are the sufferers' brothers. They take a willing share of the world's woes. Whatever concerns man is dear to them. Their heart is the home of all the race. They also stand forth, on the other hand, as the most uncompromising upholders of truth.

The self of a Mahatma is an empty sack, a mere sense of being, a mere choice between the good and the bad. All the force that makes up and fills his existence is God's. To him, the ego, the first person, the number one that fancies itself to be the centre of creation, is but a geometrical point, an amorphous atom, an empty receptacle. Dispossessed of every power, every pride, with nothing to call its own, a Mahatma's self finds itself a mere sense of existence, wholly dependent on God. What the fruit is to the rind, the corn to the husk, the jewel to the setting, God is to him. His will is so thoroughly sanctified and attuned to His Will as to become one with it.

The authority with which Mahatmas speak is felt by ordinary hearers to be divine and when they declare religious

verities, they go straight into the hearers' hearts to awaken the dim and hitherto unrealised monitions within their breasts. It is as when a note is struck on a great bell or blown from a trumpet, it sets athrill in a neighbouring piano or violin the same note in a tremulous response. At last is the violin's own music, wrought of its own fabric. Yet it would have been silent but for the call of the bell and mightier instrument.

Again, the readiness with which when instruction is imparted, religious ideas find admission even to the densest minds and those most unfortunately situated, also shows that there is in us something which relates to those ideas which disposes the mind like soil for their reception—something in which they naturally grow and germinate.

God creates Mahatmas that they might receive and spread their own souls and spread abroad the supreme Bliss which is His. The characteristic of these holy persons is that they are never satisfied unless they impart to others that in which they themselves enjoy. They never feel happy until they preach to the world the truth which He has disclosed to them. They do not shrink from sacrificing their lives in order that they may shower upon thousands around them the great joy of righteousness. The more they are neglected by the world, the more they are spited, the more they are slandered for spreading His truths and carrying out His missions, the greater is their sternness, the firmer their resolution. And whether it be the crippled lamb or the oppressed slave or the depressed Harijan or the helpless widow or the homeless orphan, they take up the cause of sorrow and suffering, gather the afflicted to their bosom and rejoice in the heart and in the soul that they have been privileged thus to serve Him. Theirs is a life of ceaseless, exacting labours to overcome and to outlive untold vicissitudes of privation or affliction, of prejudice or haughtiness, of struggle or ordeals, be they of hostilities without or of temptations

within, a life which closes abruptly as if cut off in its mid-career, suggesting an apparent failure, presenting a broken arc. Such a life alone exemplifies the sacrifice demanded and of the destiny ordained by God. This unsparing sacrifice furnishes the key-note to every life that really counts in human history. Not he whose life is one spell of encouraging engagements and fruitful accomplishments, but he whose life is one strain of seemingly hopeless efforts and fruitless results, may be said to stand hostage for the credit of Truth. This is the life connoted by the Cross, the Cross so cheerfully borne by all Mahatmas.

Mahatmas have therefore in all ages been tried minds. The seer has been the greatest sufferer. The world has always mis-understood, persecuted and tormented God's prophets and suffering has all along been the badge of their tribe. They make manifest the true meaning of the soul by giving up self for the love of mankind. They face calumny and persecution, dishonour and death in their service of love. For, in the words of the Isopanishad, "*When to the wise man the Self has become all things, what delusion or what sorrow can here be to him who sees unity.*" They live the life of the soul, not of the self and thus they prove to us the ultimate truth of humanity. In the language of the Kathopanishad, "*All desires that exist in their hearts cease, they become immortal and attain Brahman even here.*" They shed their influence and example even as lonely rocks in the desert cast deep shadows and point the path.

All Mahatmas portray God's moral beauty in the highest measure possible for a God-illuminated soul. Their persons and portraits whose colour no time can obliterate, no accident can impair, are tenderly honoured, not because their bodies were finer objects than other men's, but because of the nobleness, saintliness and spirituality that shone through them and made them beautiful. The nimbus that hallows the heads of the immortals is thrown out not by the sun-

light or the atmosphere but by the moral beauty from within. The shadow of Supreme Humanity falls upon the heads of all Mahatmas like a divine aureole and their influence spreads like wild fire.

We know in our own experience that living, dead or dead, Mahatmas reign over the hearts of men; we submit ourselves to their authority willingly, lovingly and cheerfully. The reason for this is not far to seek. The intuitions of the Divine in our hearts profoundly recognise their counterpart in some men we come across either in history, or in our experiences of life. It is impossible to be devoid of sympathy for the great and good, because these are, in fact, ourselves; that is to say, the embodiment and reality of what is noblest and best in us, that which we cannot make ourselves even if we would. All the impulses and strong wishes for moral or spiritual life we feel, and which, somehow or other, we fail to give effect, become projected realities in these superior beings. The mind of God, faintly shadowed in our hearts, kindles into a sort of supernatural light in them. This light we did not make, we cannot quench. It illumines our path far before and behind. They become divine men; their presence and their life strike us as not of this earth. Not a few fall down and worship them as gods. Thus the wisdom of Greece took shape in a Socrates; the stoicism of Rome in a Seneca; the asceticism and conquest of India in a Sakya-Muni, or its insight in a Krishna; or its longing for spiritual worship in a Ram Mohan Roy; or its intense love and devotion to the God-Mother in a Ramakrishna Paramahansa, or its yearning for independence in a Mahatma Gandhi; the Chinese sense of duty in Confucius; the Arab energy of faith in a Mohammed. As long as these souls continue to represent our moral and spiritual impulses, none can depose them, none can remove them. Each is a principle of humanity, each a phase of the divine reason, each is a spiritual principle personified.

revealed to inspire our hearty trust in Him and our adoration of His matchless wisdom, power and love.

Mysterious, no doubt, are very often the ways of God, yet patent to the believing soul is His benevolent providence that directs the energies and shapes the destinies of man in its larger groupings of nations. History is, as it has happily termed, the universal Bible—the true ‘*God’s Book*’ even as a revelation of His goodness and glory manifested in such timely and fitting grant of those great making epochs and ages whom a grateful world, with a poet’s soul’s poetry, names the “*chosen ones*” of Heaven.

Before closing this chapter, it may be stated that the manifestations of the glory of God in nature gave rise to the literature of the Vedas. His manifestations in the soul of man were the source of the sublime literature of the Upanishads, our spiritual philosophy. And the incarnations of God in heroes and prophets in the history of mankind give the real meaning of the Puranas.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE RISHIS’ SADHANAS FOR REALISING THE FORMLESS AND INVISIBLE BRAHMAN THE SACRAMENT OF SPIRITUAL WORSHIP.

The fundamental idea in every religion is a consciousness of the existence of a Super-human Invisible Being and, as a corollary therefrom, faith in the survival of the human soul after death. In our spiritual endeavours, it is most important to keep always in view the distinction between this personal consciousness of God and a mere intellectual assent to His existence. For, it is one thing to say with the understanding that God exists; it is quite a different thing to say with the whole heart and soul—“My God is before me and behind me and filleth all space”. It is one thing to talk of God as

Eternal, Infinite, Majestic Sovereign of the universe ; it is quite another thing to feel Him very near our hearts as our living and loving Father. In other words, one can believe in the existence of God,—even in the philosophical necessity for a God—and even in His moral government of the world, without any consciousness of Him in the soul, without any sense of our relation to Him or of His relation to us. In such a case, there is no religion in the proper sense of the term. Only when God is *felt* to be a concrete Reality and *loved* as a conscious Personality truly affecting our hearts, character and conduct, can we say that there is any Religion.

The Religion of Trust and Love in and towards God is the best and strongest impulse and aid to goodness, holiness and happiness ; while the Religion of Fear and Dread is one of the greatest hindrances to the cultivation of true virtue. The Religion of Love favourably affects the heart and character. The Religion of Fear only affects the conduct through fear of punishment, stimulates the desire to escape the penalty, not to turn with loathing from the sin itself, outrages the Divine love and corrupts and enslaves the human heart.

As God is a Spirit, and formless, how did the Rishis perceive and feel Him as a Reality and love him as a Person ? They perceived Him not as an exaggerated and preternatural man, not as an imagined material glory, but as the light and life of creation—the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world ;—“ The binding chord which links all things that are born,” as the *Atharva Veda* says. This vision becomes more and more resplendent as our senses and faculties are purified and deepened. As the pervasive Spirit in nature, the Rishis were able to behold the face of God as we behold the soul of our fellow-men in the framework of flesh. As the in-dwelling Presence, the Eternal Person is immanent everywhere. Says the Rishi of the *Kenopanishad* : “ *Our life attains its object if we can know Him here and if we do not know Him here, that is the greatest calamity ; therefore.*

the wise having realised Him as the One Supreme God in all things moving or stationary, become immortal, when they depart from this world." The Rishis felt the reality of God so vividly and deeply that the light of such knowledge filled their whole life and brightened their earthly journey. In other words, the consciousness of God as the Truth of truths, as All-in-all, coloured and permeated all other forms of their consciousness, outer and inner, so that they actually lived, moved, breathed and had their being in Him. Likewise, the love of God instead of visiting them occasionally as a sentiment or emotion became their over-mastering passion and guiding impulse of life. According to "them, life in God through all occurrences is a pilgrimage which begins as soon as the eye sees light and never ends though we pass through the dark veil.

What are the *sadhanas* (means) prescribed by the Rishis for the practical realisation of the consciousness and love of God? Says Rishi Yajnavalkya to his wife Maitreyi in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad: "*Verily, the Self is to be seen, to be heard, to be perceived, O Maitreyi! When we see, hear, perceive and know the Self, then all this is known.*" This verse forms the basis of the four stages of Upanishadic spiritual culture known to the Vedantists as *Sravana*, *Manana*, *Nididhyasana* and *Darsana*. In commenting upon this passage, Sankara says that seeing the self (*darsana*) is the end, and hearing (*sravana*), thinking (*manana*) and meditating (*nididhyasana*) are the means to that end. Accordingly, *darsana* (seeing) though mentioned first by the Rishi, really comes last. It is relatively the *sidhi* (fruition) and the others are *sadhanas*.

The first stage *sravana* consists in the devout study of sacred literature, conversation on spiritual subjects with fellow pilgrims on the path of the higher life, and listening to the inspired words of experienced spiritual teachers. But such study or listening to religious exhortations counts for

nothing if it is not accompanied or followed by thought and the mental effort to understand and be deeply convinced of religious truths. Conviction can come out of thought only—deep and systematic thought—leading not merely to a mastery of the contents of religious books,—of the findings of the various systems of philosophy and theology—but to something less than the building up of a regular system in the mind—a system of reasoned conclusions and verified intuitions about the leading truths of spiritual religion. The building up of such a system is called *manana*, a system absolutely necessary before the possibility of the next *udhana* which is called *nididhyasana*, continuous meditation (yoga), to mentally realise the presence of God as the only Reality. Thus all these three processes lead to the final goal—*darsana*, the direct realisation of God as the self, as our own self and as the self of the Universe, when the heart is at once set athrill by a profound feeling of a sacred and vivifying Presence encompassing us and the soul elevated above the world of sense and exalted into the sanctifying Presence, the Holy of Holies. In the words of Sankara :—“It is when these are combined and not otherwise that there arises a distinct vision relating to the unity of God and the individual self.”

In this connection, it may also be stated that *nididhyasana* is conceived as having three stages—*dharana*, *dhyana* and *samadhi*. To grasp Brahman as the self and the world—to catch hold of Him, as it were, as ‘this is it’ is named *dharana*. To tighten this grasp when it becomes loose is called *dhyana*. When through this attempt, there remains nothing between the *dhyata* and the *dhyaya*, the subject and the object of meditation, so that they become indissoluble, the stage is called *samadhi* which is a condition of perfect bliss and unspotted holiness and gives us a foretaste of liberation. When it becomes permanent in life, it is called *sanmukti* (liberation while still living). Even when it does

not become permanent, its effect pervades practical life according to its depth.

I may here state that in order to help the practice of *nididhyasana* (yoga or deep meditation), the Rishis have drawn up what are called *Vidyas* or *Upasanas*. The Chandogya Upanishad contains the largest number of them. Some of them are very beautiful and may profitably be used even at the present time as aids to public and private devotions. Many of them have been mentioned in Chapter VI *supra*—For example, Kathopanishad—Chapter V, verses 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15; Svetasvatara, Chapter II, verse 17, Chapter III, verses 5, 6, Chapter IV, verse 21; Chandogya—Chapter III, Section 14 (*Sandilya Vidya*).

The *nididhyasana*, otherwise called the yoga system of philosophy, seems to be very ancient as a system of spiritual discipline. We find it outlined, though not named as a distinct system, in the earliest Upanishads, the *Chandogya*, the *Brihadaranyaka*, the *Aitaraya*, the *Taittiriya* and the *Kaushitaki*. The ideal of character implied in the *sadhanas* specified above is briefly set forth in the *Brihadaranyaka* text—“*Therefore, he who knows thus becomes calm, subdued, free from desire, enduring, composed in mind, and sees the Self in himself and all things as the Self. Sin does not subdue him; he subdues sin. Sin does not consume him; he consumes sin. He becomes free from sin, free from desire, free from doubt, a (real) Brahman. This is the world of Brahman.*” In the verse-Upanishads, the *Katha* and the *Svetasvatara*, which are later and belong to the earlier *sutra* period, the system of Yoga is actually named and in the latter takes a definite shape. In the Kathopanishad we find *Yama* teaching the system to *Nachiketa*. The very term “Yoga” occurs in the last chapter. In verses 10 and 11 of this Chapter, the practice is thus described:—“*When the five senses with the sensorium, are at rest, and the understanding also does not work—that is called the highest condition by the wise. They call that*

unmoved state of the senses Yoga. The worshipper then becomes watchful, for Yoga is subject to rise and fall."

In the Svetasvatara Upanishad, Yoga takes a more systematic form. After describing the postures, the surroundings and conditions in which the aspirant should practise Yoga, and forewarning him of the nature of the premonitions of the revelation of Brahman in the course of the practise, the Rishi declares: "*When one practising Yoga truly sees Brahman by seeing his self, as one sees objects by a lamp, when he knows the unchangeable God, unsullied by any object, he is free from all bonds.*"

The implication of the above text is that as a preliminary to the realisation of the Supreme Self, we have first to see and realise our own self. But what is the practical process by which we can see and realise our own self. The Rishis seem to give no definite and regularised clue to this. Even Svetasvatara is not more explicit than merely laying down that "*by making one's own body one of the two pieces of firewood and pranava as the other piece, one should practise meditation, which is like rubbing and thereby see God, who is hidden like fire*". In his celebrated work, *Brahma-jigñāṣa*, Pandit Sitanath Tattwabhusan, has, however, indicated the process of realising the self as follows :—

"Retire to a solitary place. Draw away your mind so far as you can from external objects and stop the activity of your senses. Cease to see, hear and touch. Let all thoughts of external objects also cease and let the mind be quiet and at rest. Perhaps even when all other objects have moved away from the mind, one will still remain, namely, darkness or the thought of darkness. That, however, will not make much difference. Now, in this dark, quiet and lonely place, in this calm and unruffled state, try to realise your self. Have a close vision of that which you are apt to forget almost totally in your absorption in external objects. See by introspection that though all external lights are put out, the light of the self is not put out. The self is

closely attend to this characteristic of the self, -its consciousness. It has other characteristics also, but they all depend on it. The shine in its light. Consciousness is the very life of the self, consciousness itself. In this fundamental characteristic of self-consciousness, there is a sort of distinction or difference -a difference, as it were, of the root and the branch, of the support and the supported. That the self knows itself, its self-consciousness is the fundamental fact, while its knowledge of the object, darkness, depends on its self-consciousness. The self cannot know darkness without knowing itself. Not that the self knows itself first and next moment knows darkness. The fact is that the self knows itself and darkness at once by the same undivided act of knowing. Nevertheless, self-consciousness is the essential condition and ground of consciousness of darkness. To be conscious of darkness, we must be necessarily conscious of one's self. Darkness cannot be known without the knowledge of the self. It is not possible to know darkness. In the knowledge of darkness, the whole content of knowledge involved is "I know darkness". Darkness cannot be known without the knowing 'I'.

Let us carry the process thus described by Patanjali and Tattwabhusan a step further. According to Rishi Yajñavalkya, *the self is the person of light consisting of knowledge*, i.e., self-luminous and therefore lights the darkness too as stated above. For 'darkness' or the thought of darkness that lingers in the mind when all other objects have been put away from it and when all other lights have been put away, we substitute the *thought* of the Supreme Self, the *thought* of His overpowering, enveloping, pervasive, tremendous Living Presence, a Concrete Reality, the Consciousness of a self-sustaining, vivifying Existence, filling all space and time and surrounding us on all sides particularly occupying the cavity of the heart. This process gradually leads us to see the self, *in one's self as one sees one's self in a looking glass and according to the Rishis, Brahman cannot be reached by eye or speech, the sensorium or the eye.—Kathopanishad, VI, 5 and*

In passing, I may add that it is this process that has been adumbrated by the Rishis that forms the basis of *Dhyana Yoga* of chapter VI of the Bhagavadgita. Again

Rishis assert in Chapter V of Chandogya (Section xviii) and the second Mundaka of the Mundaka Upanishad that the whole universe and the objects therein are the forms and manifestations of Brahman and that He should be realised in them also. There is no doubt that the texts of these Upanishads also form the groundwork of *Vibhuti Yoga* (God's special manifestations) of chapter X and *Viswarupa-darsanam* (God as the World-form) of chapter XI of the Bhagavadgita.

Thus, we see that the Rishis realised God as a Living Presence, as a concrete Reality, just as we see the presence of the sky and the sun, the moon and the stars. They realised Him not as the diffused intellect but as the penetrating Will of the universe, not as the ethical atmosphere that broods but as the Almighty wind that sweeps wherever spirits are. As the in-dwelling Presence, the Supreme Being is everywhere and in every thing, from the noblest creature of a divine man to the meanest worm that crawls on earth, and is realised in a thousand different ways according to the varying knowledge, culture and temperament of the percipient. A few of these different ways will be briefly indicated below:—

Standing alone on a Himalayan cliff, as we cast our eyes over the precipice into the vast woods below, a vague awe seizes us as if in the solitude there is something that touches us from behind. We feel the same sensation in the presence of towering summits of snow, or in a little boat amid great masses of heaving, swaying waters far from shore, or in a grave-yard where, in the stillness of night, every tomb-stone is a grim reminder of our own ephemeral existence. In the loneliness and danger of our position, we feel we are in the presence of *something* before which we are small and helpless. The awe felt deepens into dependence. In the massive forest of many shades, sounding with a hundred bird-notes, so strangely penetrating the intervals of silence, the fall and flow of streams faintly heard, all the sweetness, all the restful calmness

of sight, sound and colour, does not lighten, but makes the sense of Presence more oppressive. And if we utter anything as a prayer or a hymn, or even an ejaculation, our wonder turns with tenfold effect, as if a thousand voices have answered us. The *Presence* confronts us, strikes us. We are hushed; we bow before it; we prostrate ourselves before

God's Presence confronts us not only in places rendered specially sacred by hoary tradition such as the land of Eden or the garden of Gethsemane, the caves of the Tibetan heights or the Himalayan mountains, Kasi or Rameswaran, Jerusalem or Bethsaida, Mecca or Medina, but also upon the familiar roadside or the frequented margin of the sea, in the homely scene of the bursting seed or the opening flower, in the day duty or night nursing, in the general laugh or the secret grief, in the procession of life ever entering afresh and solemnly passing by and dropping off. It is not a vague sense or abstract feeling or arbitrary faith. It shapes itself in every object of light and lustre, of strength and terror, sweetness and tenderness, in every kind of order, beauty, progress and righteousness, in every insect, bird, beast, man or angel. The sense of it inevitably grows as the mind grows in spiritual fervour.

Further, when the tyrannies of flesh for one moment cease, when the fever of earthly desires finds a brief remission, then the consciousness of the supreme fact of the God's indwelling glows into attitudes of blessedness which intensify the whole being and draw it within. In the union of the spirit with the Spirit, the sense of everything else is drowned. All our varied faculties resolve into channels through which the abundance of God is poured within. There are infinite diversities of the manifestation of God. No two men realise the Spirit exactly alike. It depends upon the make and the need of each soul. The aspirations of each find a fulfilment, and each fulfilment is a revelation. Upon the soul as an organic centre, the infinite forces of the Spirit have their

ceaseless play. The feelings rise and fall, the intelligence presents an ever-changing panorama, motives flit across in ghostly succession. The Divine countenance is seen in all its varying glory mirrored everywhere. Such is the beginning of life in the Spirit. There is a wonderful variety of change, impulse, energy, insight, growth, thought and expression, when the Spirit is active within the heart.

God has also a thousand tongues by which to utter love and comfort unto our souls. Every appeal that nature makes to us in lovely vision of earth or sea or sky is a caress of God. The beauty of the midnight heavens or the sunset clouds is the expression of His countenance. And to many and many a man whom the study of many books has left in doubt of the reality of this Living God who loves His children, the sunshine on the lake, or the cool shades of the lonely wood, or the wayside flower, or the stormful cataract, or the wide and heaving sea, has presently come as a voice distinct as his mother's cradle-song of old, saying, 'I am here, the God of love and power; I am surely with thee; thou canst not go where I am not.' In a word, the Rishis realised their Parabrahman everywhere and in every object, every moment of their life.

In this connection I may relate what Brahmarishi Venkataratnam described in his 'Message and Ministrations'.

"That inspiring American Poet, James Russel Lowell, has a beautiful little poem to which he gives the name of a parable. The substance of the piece is this: There was a certain person who believed in God, worshipped God and humbly served God, but could not realise the presence of God with clearness and certainty. So he leaves the neighbourhood, ascends a lofty hill and there turning to God, says 'Thou art not to be found in homesteads and meadows. This sublime hill-top is Thy abode. Hence I have toiled my way up here. As unto the prophets of old thou did'st reveal Thyself in unmistakable signs, amidst thunder and lightning, through fire and cloud, so do Thou now reveal Thyself unto me through some sure sign that will bring me the assurance and the joy of direct vision.'" Having offered this prayer, he presses his ear against a rock and awaits the traditional thunder and lightning. There is no stir in the air, no throb in the earth, till weary and

disappointed, he opens his hungry eyes. The crust of moss gathered there has a split; and through the crevice there peeps up a charming violet flower. His heart is moved with the grace of the Lord. And he exclaims, '*Thou Living God, Thou dost manifest Thyself in this way. This violet that has rent its way through the granite brings me the impressive message of the living God that His Holy Spirit thus surges up in every life through oppressive circumstances. Thou art manifest even in this violet. But in the blindness of my faithless soul, I failed to recognise Thee, when my daughter produced a similar violet and presented it to me as having grown in our court-yard. I could not, I disdained to see Thee in that homely violet. Thou art present in my very home, if only I possess the heart to receive Thee.*'

In like manner, our Rishis realised God in their own home, their sweet and sacred home amidst social surroundings—home in which peace and sanctity reign and which stands nearer to heaven than any human institution; where love is the force by which God chiefly fashions souls to their final issues in the cheerful stir of family life; where warm light from kind eyes, from quick unconscious smiles, from gentleness in tones, from unpremeditated caress of manner, from habits of forethoughtfulness for one another, from the order and serenity of our minds, from the spirit of patience and tender mercy in our hearts: all this happy illumination in the inside of a home transforms it into a paradise, the living temple of God. Heaven is Home and Home is Heaven. Detach Home from Heaven and Home is a prison cell. Detach Heaven from Home and Heaven is a mirage. In our sweet Home, we not only come into life in love and continue in life in love, but live in love, with God in the centre in the indescribable enjoyment of communion, of sweet, beatific, rapturous intercourse with Him.

The Rishis have thus taught us by their example that every one of God's children can acquire a spiritual eye (*Divyam Chakshu*) like them by constant *meditation* and see Him everywhere. But what is *meditation*? It is nothing but what philosophers call '*attention*'. It is the concentration of the mind on the Self as explained in the beginning of

apter. I shall now amplify the process further. If to meditate on God, we dismiss for a while all work and worldly thoughts and having composed our mind, fix our attention immovably on His All-encompassing Presence. The Divine Presence and that alone occupies the mind. This the Rishis called **dharana**. On the background of this God-consciousness, we project, as it were, His transcendent and immanent attributes and contemplate upon all their varied phases until we forget ourselves and our surroundings. We persevere repeatedly this course of application day after day. We persevere for months and years. And our consciousness of Reality grows daily in vividness and joy, as the mind becomes more and more concentrated in it till it becomes absorbing. This process which is a continuation of what is called **dhyan** by the Rishis. Like the bee which while it moves from one flower to another and finally falls into silent absorption in the act of drinking nectar, so our mind roams with delight from the contemplation of one divine attribute to another and finally drops into a state of silent absorbing communion and enjoys the peace and unruffled joy. The result of this habitual concentration, **this Practice of the Presence** is that we dive deeper and deeper into the Divine and draw the Infinite more and more into the finite, more and more absorbed in divine consciousness, in the due course and in God's own time, the attributes of divinity contemplated upon by us present themselves in a dramatic view in synthetic unity before our meditative mind simultaneously, without any conscious effort on its part, they come up and thrill through and illuminate all the flashes of sudden insight. This the Rishis called

thus realise and see the Supreme Being with our *chakshu* (spiritual eye) as a "*Bright Spirit*," as the

Kathopanishad avers, seated in His Throne of glory radiating light to all the worlds and dispensing from the inexhaustible store-house of His Power and Wisdom, Bliss and Goodness, Holiness and Beauty, quickening and strengthening influences that keep up the organism of the universe and all that is contained in it. We behold Him as that God of Might when we obey, as that God of Wisdom when we esteem, as that God of Bliss in whom we revel, as that God of Goodness in whom we confide, as that God of Holiness to whom we bow, as that God of Beauty in whom we are captivated. Though He is majestic, mighty and mysterious, the smile of His love shines through the splendour of His majesty; the greatness of His might displays the gentleness of His providence; in the deep mystery of His nature lies the surety of His Fatherhood. So high yet so near, so transcendent yet so intimate, He is to us.

We see ourselves and the world, *the-we* and *the not-we*, living, moving and having our very being in His Central Will-Force, in His Intelligent and Loving Personality. Gradually, He, the Almighty, overpowers our little soul; He, the All-Wise, confounds our wisdom; He, the All-Merciful, carries away our love; He, the All-Holy, dazzles our conscience. Thus captivated, enraptured, entranced and overpowered, we look more steadily at His Presence which shines as something awfully real, a burning and mighty Reality. This Presence has in it every human attribute,—love, holiness, beauty, joy, force, unity, infinity, every blessed quality to which contemplation may be attuned at the time, one spiritual Presence which dissolves itself through the spectrum of soul-vision into all the varied tints of a charming majestic personality, marvellously like unto man's, though infinitely more than human. From the depths of our being, it surges up as the fountain of vitality. From above, it descends like a continued shower of heavenly inspiration. From all sides, it draws near as the presence of one who is nearest and dearest.

We see in Him a graceful Person, a sweet moral Being, a joyous Spirit, a charming and gladdening Sight, a Serenity and a Sweetness surpassing myriads of lunar orbs.

As we see Him face to face and realise our unity with Him, we also see our unmistakable distinctness from Him. We see ourselves as the souls, Himself as the All-Soul; ourselves as the jeevatmas, Himself as the Paramatma; ourselves as the little-selves, Himself as the Great-Self; ourselves as the purushas, Himself as the Parama Purusha; ourselves as the created, Himself as the Uncreated; ourselves as the relative, Himself as the Absolute; ourselves as the limited, Himself as the Unlimited; ourselves as the finite and Himself as the Infinite; ourselves as the imperfect and Himself as the Perfect; ourselves as the transient and Himself as the Intransient; ourselves as the born and Himself as the Unborn; ourselves as the defined and Himself as the Undefined; ourselves as the embodied and Himself as the Unembodied; ourselves as the manifested and Himself as the Unmanifested; ourselves as the supported and Himself as the Unsupported.

As our cognitive faculties apprehend His Almighty, All-wise, All-good, All-beautiful Person, our soul recognises in Him its Father and Mother, Friend and Guide, Teacher and Saviour, Gladdener and Comforter, Hope and Joy, Life and Support, Everlasting Destiny and Goal, eternal Rock and Refuge. At the same time, our heart overflows with the emotions of gratitude, trust, reverence, wonder, love, joy, enthusiasm and our mental eye endeavours to expand its vision and realise Him in His manifold and varied activities in the whole world of time and space.

Where is He not? He, who by His breath kindles the quenchless stars, yet seeks delight in the frail earthen lamps of men! He, who passes His royal progress and imperial procession, attended with all the glory, pomp and wealth of the worlds, yet pauses to stretch out His Hand for the poor widow's mite and for the least of the little grains in the scrip

of the beggar ! We see Him everywhere, in the magnificent mansions, in the lowliest slums, in the solitary cells, in the awe-inspiring caves, in the *Prahalada's pillar*, in the *Kuchela's kuteeram*.

We see Him in the holy cell of the saint, alone with the alone, mindful of no outer world, depending on no material wants, absorbed in contemplation, rejoicing in poverty, triumphing in tribulation, abdicating all the senses, consecrating all the faculties to the one sacred function of adoration and meditation.

We see Him even in that deserted, dilapidated, plague-stricken shed, with the child in its last gasps, with the mother's heart upon the rack, feeling the agony of phenomenal separation but hoping for eternal reunion.

We see Him in the tornado of battle, limbs shattered, heads knocked off, trunks full of gore, nurses and doctors defying death and seeking service even at the mouth of the destroying cannon.

We see Him in ourselves, helpless, restless, discarded, unpitied, sorrowing, penitent sinners, our home a hell, our bed a rack, our hands clenched in despair and folded in appeal ; our heads burning, burning, burning with the flames of recollection ; our hearts tearing, tearing, tearing with the earthquakes of remorse ; our souls weeping, sinking, wallowing in the pangs of separation.

We see Him, our beloved God, everywhere, in the sand, in the stream, in the sea, in the gale, on the mountain, up in the sky, down in the centre of the earth, through all spaces, along all times ; in the human heart, in the saint, even in the sinner, in prosperity, in adversity, smiling with the truly happy, pitying the really sorrowful, wiping the tear, inspiring the hope, cheering up, sustaining, reclaiming with His Loving Arm, gathering to His Loving Bosom, harmonising discord, unifying variety. We realise Him as the Great Peace-

Maker, the great *Pathitha Pavana*, the Sanctifier of the fallen, the All-Holy, Merciful, Loving God.

Divinely inspired in moments of devotional excitement and profound meditation, not only the ancient Rishis of India but men of faith coming after them in all ages and climes have, according to historical records, vividly realised the presence of the Supreme Being everywhere in the material universe. To cite a few instances out of thousands which adorn the religious literature of the world :—

Moses, the Prince of Hebrew prophets, saw God, his Jehovah, the real Almighty Jehovah of the universe, in a little burning bush, when he went up to mountain heights to receive his commission. Like a true yogi, he looked at the burning bush ; the light of His inspiration flashed on his eyes and his heart and where others saw but a bush in flame, he beheld in it God's Resplendent Person. Was it a material form, a visible and tangible figure? No. God is Spirit and Moses beheld Him, his Spirit-God, ablaze in the burning bush, as a tremendous overpowering Presence.

Jesus Christ, the human exemplar of love and forgiveness, beheld God in a flying bird. When he came out of the waters of the Jordan in which he was baptised, he saw a strange transfiguration in the sky. The heavens were opened and a dove was hovering over-head in which he saw The Divine Spirit. As a transcendental Spiritualist, a Yogi of yogis, Jesus actually saw with the divine eye of yoga an opening heaven and a descending divinity. And where did he see this grand vision? In the material sky and in an ordinary little bird fluttering in the air. To the uninitiated eye of ordinary man, the sky is but sky, mere empty space and a dove is but a bird, a bundle of live flesh and blood and nothing more. But Christ's regenerated eye did not see matter but saw through matter. The sky above threw off its material veil and God's effulgence shone forth. And the dove became

so spiritualised and so transparent that Christ saw in it and through it God's Divine Personality.

Chaitanya, the immortal prophet of Nuddea, (Bengal), realised God as his sweet *Hari* everywhere and finally had His glorious vision in the waters of the Chilka Lake. A certain evening, when the sky was clear, the moon shone in full effulgence and rapture and presented a most attractive appearance, Chaitanya had gone out for his usual walk. He suddenly fell into a reverie. The Chilka Lake appeared to him as the river Jumna and the surrounding scenery as Madhura. He had a vision of God as his favourite Krishna and rushed to embrace Him in His transcendental beauty and was drowned in the lake.

The lowly and unlearned, yet the celebrated mystic, **Brother Lawrence of France** realised God's Providence and Power, when only eighteen years old, in the mere sight of a dry and leafless tree on a mid-winter day and the reflections it stirred respecting the change the coming spring would bring, how the flowers and fruits would reappear, suddenly made him altogether a new man, set him perfectly loose from the world and initiated his mystical career. From that time, he lived a wholly consecrated man, absorbed in the '*Practice of the Presence of God*,' grew eminently in divine knowledge and love and has left to the world much of that wisdom which only lips, the Holy Spirit has touched, can express. He has bequeathed to us that unique testimony that he was more united to God in his outward employments than when he left them for devotion in retirement; that he was as much helped by His conscious companionship in his business in the kitchen as during the set times of meditation and prayer.

Emerson, the renowned sage of America, realised God's beautiful form in a sweet rose. While strolling one morning as usual in his garden, he saw a blooming rose. He was not only elated at its colour and fragrance but was thrilled with

oly awe of the Universal Beautiful and the Universal
ning One in that flower. He instantly took off his
nd adored God in it exclaiming 'This is holy ground.'
ose was not the object of his obeisance. As soon as he
ssed it, his spiritual eye was quickened. He saw God's
nce in it. He was overpowered and enraptured.

Debendranath Tagore, the princely Maharishi of Bengal,
ther of the renowned poet and philosopher Dr. Rabindra-
Tagore, as already stated in Chapter IV, *supra*, when
et eighteen, vividly realised God at the bed-side of his
grand-mother on the river-bank at a cremation ghat.
ding to a pious custom, this lady, whose recovery from
s had been given up, was carried to the river-bank to die.
she survived three nights, while priests were chanting
hymns and *sankirthanists* were singing in a chorus
ld that I expired with the name of *Hari* on my

It was a full-moon night and a gentle breeze was
ng ; when the above song entered the ear of young
dranath, a strange sense of the unreality of all things
d across his mind. A strong dislike of wealth arose.
as blessed with the direct vision of God's Holy Presence.
w Him, the God of Glory, unfolding Himself in his heart
His love, beauty and holiness and proclaimed to the
His mercy as follows :—

The God of Glory suddenly revealed Himself in my soul and
irely charmed me and sweetened my heart that, for a time, I
ued ravished—quite immersed in a flood of divine light. The
outside and the world within both seemed bathed in a sweet
rene stream of celestial effulgence. What was it but the light
h, the water of baptism, the message of salvation? What was
t so charmed me? The Loving Presence of the Living God,
ould doubt? I saw it, I felt it ; like a live coal, it quickened me.
an unmistakable revelation of God's mercy ; I read it plain as
letters in midday light. I clearly recognised His fingers in
aving dispensation. It was none other than my God, the
ne Father and Mother, the Friend of the sinners, the Protector
helpless, destitute and cast away, who vouchsafed in His infinite

mercy to appear in my corrupt heart to heal me and chasten me. His mercy, so great and undeserved, staggered me. The light of His countenance, so pure, so holy. I dared not approach it; but His paternal love, so sweet, so tender, I blessed Him. For a while in beatific ecstasy, I lay, drinking largely the sweets of divine communion; no temporal care, no anxiety dared interrupt that sweet beatitude."

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa would go into ecstatic raptures at the very thought of the Supreme Being as the Universal Mother whose felt presence he enjoyed almost every hour of his life from when he was a boy of hardly eight years. His avocation in the early period of his life was that of a priest at the temple of Kali in the village of Dakshineswar (Bengal). When he was 20 years old, on a certain occasion, he felt that the Mother withheld Her *darsan* to him. Unable to bear this separation, he became almost mad and was on the point of taking away his life. At that moment, he had a glorious vision which he described as follows:—

"One day I was torn with intolerable anguish. My heart seemed to be wrung as a damp cloth might be wrung I was racked with pain. A terrible frenzy seized me at the thought that I might never be granted the blessing of this Divine vision. I thought if that were so, then enough of this life! A sword was hanging in the sanctuary of Kali. My eyes fell upon it and an idea flashed through my brain like a flash of lightning. "The sword! It will help me to end it." I rushed up to it, and seized it like a madman . . . And lo! the whole scene, doors, windows, the temple itself vanished It seemed as if nothing existed any more. Instead I saw an ocean of the Spirit, boundless, dazzling. In whatever direction I turned, great luminous waves were rising. They bore down upon me with a loud roar as if to swallow me up. In an instant they were upon me. They broke over me, they engulfed me. I was suffocated. I lost consciousness and I fell . . . How I passed that day and the next I know not. Round me rolled an ocean of ineffable joy. And in the depths of my being I was conscious of the presence of the Divine Mother."

To the spiritual, all things are spiritual; to the divine eye, all things reveal divinity. When the Spirit of God fills the soul like a medium, all things are seen as through a

avenly crystal. In the twinkling of an eye, as if by an unseen touch, an inner magic, all is changed, all is new, all spiritual. An unsuspected meaning suffuses creation and human events. The power of the Supreme Being that inflames the seer inflames also what is seen. When the Spirit replies to the spirit, it is a wonderful music, a wonderful light, the vision of a new *Brindavan*. To see the very God of the universe, in an instant, in a little burning bush, in an ordinary winged bird, in the rushing waters of a lake, in a dry and leafless tree, in a blooming rose, in a dying human, in a material image, not only as an inspiring vital force but as a living Personal Divinity, is a feat of spiritual perception which only a Moses, a Jesus, a Chaitanya, a Brother Lawrence, an Emerson, a Debendranath, a Ramakrishna equal.

It will be seen from the above that the Holy Spirit of the Supreme Being inspires not only saints and sages of the past, but every one of His humble devotees who approach Him with love and faith. The clouds still gather on the arid Sinai and the blooming bush at sunset burns with an consuming fire. We require only the spirit of Moses to approach them with reverent feet! The rose plant still flowers in Shiraz and the nightingale sings its wakeful song. We need the kindling in us of the fervour of Hafiz to behold the Face, the Face of the Beloved, 'intoxicated with the wine of Divine Love! May He open and quicken our spiritual eye that we may see, realise Him, enjoy and rejoice in His sweet Presence and commune with Him everywhere!

The Rishis further proclaim that God has singled out man out of the whole creation for enjoying the supreme privilege of knowing and worshipping Him. He has made man a point of radiance in the great corona of humanity where He is the substance.

But, how does God lead man to His worship? The plain truth is man is naturally set towards God as towards

a magnet. Worship is not a mere accomplishment but the food and drink of human nature. It is an instinct put there by the hand of God. The world is, as it were, a suburb, an out-station of the City of God. "The Heavens declare the glory of God and the Firmament showeth His handi-work." One and all of the objects in nature, from the tiniest to the most majestic, sing, "The hand that made us is Divine." It is these foot-prints of the Deity on creation that guide the pilgrim to the Celestial City. They are the altar-stairs that slope from earth to heaven; and only there, man ascends to the foot-stool of God. Such is the ascent from the concrete to the abstract or rather from the effects to the Prime Cause; from nature to nature's Spirit God. Every leaf in the green foliage of trees is a record of God's wisdom. Not only does every philomel tell the beads of His praise, but also every thorn is a tapering finger to point out the glory of God.

God being a Spirit, then by acts of the spirit alone can He be approached and worshipped; by an earnest intentness of our highest faculties,—the truthful and loving surrender of the soul. Be it in speech or in silence, in the chancel or in the street, in daily duty or in special rite, the conscious devotion of our best powers to His Divine appointments makes us His. Forms and words, postures and sacraments stand in no relation to Him. As mere approaches to Him are simply nothing. The truth that God is a Spirit as proclaimed by the Rishis, when properly understood, becomes one of the most comprehensive and fertile revelations of His nature. With Him every thing is subordinated to spiritual ends. His power is at the disposal of His thought; His thought is directed by His Love; His Love is in harmony with his moral perfection. He is sovereign over His Will and actions, but always according to the eternal rule of right and wrong which is Himself. He yet rules all things with an equal hand. He controls, adapts, balances material things and human progress in ways unknown or most partially known

and that without departing from his fixed eternal faithfulness of law. His impartiality, however, consists not in treating all creatures alike, whatever be their difference in rank ; but in directing to each a discriminating regard, proportioned to its nature and suited to its place. And so He arranges the storm ; He shelters the bud ; He guides the instinctive creature ; He appeals to the free and self-conscious man. He pities the fallen ; He helps the weak ; He rebukes the faithless and quits the impenitent ; loves the true and willing and abides with the saint. Yet with every system of administration, all is embraced in one vast system of rule, as observed by Dr. Martineau.

Oh, the blessedness of the certainty of the sense that God is the Spirit is ! That He is here, within, around, that He is perceptible, recognisable, personal, infinitely helpful and moving ! As soon as this is fully felt, the Unseen One embodies himself in the glories of creation. His providence takes shape in the events that happen around us, his wisdom and is will in the circumstances that environ us. He becomes force, life, design, mind ; He becomes universal life, humanity, divinity, all in one. Through all the senses of the body, through all the faculties of the soul, He pours into us. We stand awe-struck, we are stilled ; there is no other wish felt but to find our being in Him, to find our destiny fulfilled in Him. Through the medium of God's intelligence the reason sees, as with a spectrum ; all things resolve into their primitive hues, all things become spiritual and the individual spirit communes with the Universal Spirit and finds the fulfilment of its destiny. Such are the marvels of spiritual worship.

Of all the Upanishadic Rishis there is none who condemns more ruthlessly the futility of Vedic ceremonies than Rishi Angirasa of the Mundaka Upanishad. Says he : "*Fools considering sacrifices and beneficial deeds (like digging tanks and wells) to be the highest thing, know no other good. Enjoying pleasures at the height of heaven gained by good deeds they*

reenter this or an inferior world." To ward off this catastrophe, the Rishi exhorts us as under: "*Taking the bow, the great weapon spoken of in the Upanishads aim the arrow sharpened by worship. Drawing the bow with a mind fixed on that, hit the same undecaying One.*" Pure spiritual worship is what is advocated by the Upanishadic Rishis, as for instance, when Yama in Kathopanishad says "O Nachiketa, having seen the end of all desires, the support of the world, the endless fruit of sacrifices, the shore where there is no fear, the resting place which is great and praiseworthy, you have with firm determination given up these things, for you are wise" "He (the Brahman) has no form visible to the eye; no one sees Him with the eye. He is revealed through the heart, the understanding and through meditation. They who know Him become immortal." "Having obtained through Spiritual communion that Divine Being, who is difficult to be seen, who is hidden, who pervades all things, who is in the heart, who lives in inaccessible places and who is ancient, the wise man gives up both joy and sorrow."

The Rishis lay the greatest stress on the sacrament of spiritual worship as the means to the realisation of the presence of God, the one only without a second—*Ekamevadvitiam*. Section 12 of Chapter III of the Chandogya Upanishad deals with the mode of worshipping God through what is popularly known as the *Gayatri Mantram*. The *Gayatri* is one of the sacred metres. It is used in the sense of verse and as the name of a famous hymn. The *Gayatri* is often praised as the most powerful metre, and whatever can be obtained by means of the recitation of *Gayatri* verses is described as the achievement of the *Gayatri*. On account of the importance of the *Gayatri* meditation in the Vedic cult, I give below material extracts from Rajah Ram Mohan Roy's "*Prescript for offering Supreme Worship by means of the Gayatri, the most sacred text of the Vedas.*"

"Thus says the illustrious Manu: "The three great immutable words (*Bhuh*, *Bhuvah*, *Swah*, or Earth, Space, Heaven) preceded by the letter *Om* and also the "Gayatri" consisting of three measured lines, must be considered as the entrance to divine bliss."

"Whoever shall repeat them day by day for three years without negligence, shall approach the Most High God, become free as air and acquire after death an etherial essence."

"From the three Vedas, the most exalted Brahma successively milked out the three lines of this sacred text beginning with the word *Tat* and entitled *Savitri* or *Gayatri*." "Yogi Yajnavalkya also declares "By means of *Om*, *Bhuh*, *Bhuvah* and *Swah* and the *Gayatri* collectively or each of the three singly, the Most High God the source of intellect, should be worshipped."

"So Brahma himself formerly defined *Bhuh*, *Bhuvah*, *Swah*, (Earth, Space, Heaven) as the body of the Supreme Intelligence, hence these three words are called the Defined."

"Those that maintain the doctrine of the Universe being the body of the Supreme Spirit found their opinion on the following considerations:—

Firstly—That there are innumerable millions of bodies, properly speaking, worlds, in the infinity of space.

Secondly—That they move, mutually preserving their regular intervals between each other, and that they maintain each other by producing effects, primary or secondary, as the members of the body support each other.

Thirdly—That those bodies when viewed collectively are considered one in the same way as the members of an animal body, or of a machine, taken together constitute one whole.

Fourthly—Any material body whose members move methodically and afford support to each other in a manner sufficient for their preservation, must be actuated either by an internal guiding power named the soul, or by an external one as impulse.

Fifthly—It is maintained that body is as infinite as space, because body is found to exist in space as far as our perceptions, with the naked eye or by the aid of instruments, enable us to penetrate.

Sixthly—If body be infinite as space, the power that guides its members must be internal, and therefore, styled the soul and not external, since there can be no existence even in thought without the idea of location.

"Hence this sect supposes that the Supreme all-pervading power is the soul of the Universe, both existing from eternity to eternity ; and that the former has somewhat the same influence over the Universe as the individual soul has over the individual body.

"They argue further, that in proportion as the internally impelled body is excellent in its construction, the directing soul must be considered excellent. Therefore, inasmuch as the Universe is infinite in extent, and is arranged with infinite skill, the Soul by which it is animated must be infinite in every perfection.

"He (Yajnavalkya) again expounds the meaning of the *Gayatri* in three passages :

"We say the adorers of the Most High meditate on the supreme and omnipresent internal spirit of this splendid Sun. We meditate on the same Supreme Spirit, earnestly sought for by such as dread further mortal birth ; who residing in everybody as the all-pervading soul and controller of the mind, constantly directs our intellect and intellectual operations towards the acquisition of virtue, wealth, physical enjoyment and final beatitude."

So, at the end of the *Gayatri*, the utterance of the letter *Om* is commanded by the sacred passage cited by Guna-Vishnu : "A Brahman shall in every instance pronounce *Om* at the beginning and at the end, for unless the letter *Om* precede, the desirable consequence will fail and unless it follow, it will not be long retained."

"That the letter *Om*, which is pronounced at the beginning and at the end of the *Gayatri* expressly signifies the Most High, is testified by the Veda : viz., "Thus through the help of *Om* you contemplate the Supreme Spirit." (*Mundaka Upanishad*)." .

"In the *Bhagavad Gita* : "*Om* (the cause), *Tat* (that), *Sat* (existing), these are considered three kinds of description of the Supreme Being."

"In the concluding part of the commentary on the *Gayatri* by the ancient Bhatta Guna-Vishnu, the meaning of the passage is briefly given by the same author.

"He, the Spirit who is thus described, guides us. He, as the soul of the three mansions (viz., earth, space and heaven), of water, light, moisture, and the individual soul of all moving and fixed objects, and of Brahma, Vishnu, Siva, the sun and other gods of various descriptions, the Most High God illuminating, like a brilliant lamp, the seven mansions, having carried my individual soul, as spirit to the seventh heaven, the mansion of the worshippers of God called the True mansion, the residence of Brahma, absorbs it (my soul)

through his divine spirit, into his own divine essence. The worshipper thus contemplating, shall repeat the "*Gayatri*."

"And also in the Maha Nirvana Tantra : "In like manner, among all texts the *Gayatri* is declared to be the most excellent; the worshipper shall repeat it when inwardly pure reflecting on the meaning of it. If the *Gayatri* be repeated with *Om* and the *Vyahriti* (*Viz.*, *Bhuh*, *Bhuah*, *Swah*), it excels all other theistical knowledge in producing immediate bliss. Whosoever repeats it in the morning or evening or during the night, while meditating on the Supreme Being, being freed from all past sins, shall not be inclined to act unrighteously. The worshipper shall first pronounce *Om*, then the three *Vyahritis*, and afterwards the *Gayatri* of three lines and shall finish it with the term *Om*. We meditate on him from whom proceed the continuance, perishing and production of all things ; who spreads over the three mansions ; that Eternal Spirit who inwardly rules the sun and all living creatures; most desirable and all pervading ; and who, residing in intellect, directs the operation of the intellectual power of all of us material beings. The worshipper by repeating every day these three texts expressing the above meaning attains all desirable objects without any other religious observance or austerity. "One only without a second is the doctrine maintained by all the Upanishads ; that imperishable and incomprehensible Being is understood by these three texts".

"*Om*, in the first instance, signifies that Supreme Being who is the sole cause of the continuance, perishing, and production of all worlds. "He from whom these creatures are produced, by whom those that are produced exist, and to whom after death they return, is the Supreme Being, whom thou dost seek to know." (The text of the Veda quoted by the revered Sankara Acharya in the commentary on the first text of the Vedanta Darsana.)

The doubt whether or not that cause signified by *Om* exists separately from those effects, having arisen, the second text, *Bhuh*, *Bhuwah*, *Swah* is next read, explaining that God, the sole cause, eternally exists, pervading the universe, "Glorious, invisible, perfect, unbegotten, pervading all, internally and externally, is the Supreme Spirit. *Mundaka Upanishad*."

It being still doubted whether or not living creatures, large and small in the world, act independently of that sole cause, the *Gayatri* as the third in order, is read "*Tat Savitur varenyam, Bhargo devasya dhimahi, dhiyo yo nah prachodayat.*" We meditate on that indescribable Spirit inwardly ruling the splendid Sun, the express object of worship. He does not only inwardly

the Spirit, residing in and inwardly ruling all us material beings, directs mental operations towards their objects; "He who inwardly rules the sun is the same immortal spirit who inwardly rules thee;" the Chandogya Upanishad. "God resides in the heart of all creatures,"—*Bhagavad Gita*.

"The object signified by the three texts being one, their repetition collectively is enjoined. The following is their meaning in brief:—

"We meditate on the cause of all, pervading all and internally ruling all material objects, from the sun down to us and others."

Incidentally, Raja Ram Mohan Roy refers in his translation and exposition of the Gayatri reproduced above to the interpretation as given by Sir William Jones which on account of the excellence of the translation is quoted below:—

"The Gayatri or Holiest Verse of the Vedas :

Let us adore the supremacy of that divine Sun, the God-head who illuminates all, who recreates all; from whom all proceed, to whom all must return, whom we invoke to direct our understanding aright in our progress toward his holy seat: What the sun and light are to this visible world, that are the Supreme Good and Truth to the intellectual and invisible Universe; and as our corporeal eyes have a distinct perception of objects enlightened by the sun, thus our souls acquire certain knowledge, by meditating on the light of truth, which emanates from the Being of beings; that is the light by which alone our minds can be directed in the path to beatitude."

Again, the following five Sanskrit slokas (verses) taken from *Mahanirvana Tantram* which is based on the meditations of the Upanishadic Rishis show the trend of the latter's spiritual worship of the Supreme Being—the One only without a second, *Ekameyvaadviteeyam*. Their translations are also given below:

1. *Om namasthey saihethy jagath karanaya ;* We bow down to Thee, the True, the originating cause of the universe ;
- Namasthey chitay sar- va lokasrayaya ;* We bow down to Thee, the Conscious and the Intelligent, the Support of all the worlds ;
- Namoh adwaita tattwaya mukti-pradaya :* We bow down to Thee, the One only without a second, the Giver of liberation ;

- Namoh brahmaney vya-* We bow down to Thee, the All-per-
piney saswathaya ; vading, Eternal Brahman.
2. *Thwamaykam saranyam ;* Thou alone art our Refuge ; Thou alone
Thwameykam varenyam ; art worthy of our homage and
adoration ;
Thwameykam jagatha- Thou alone art the Governor of the
palakam swaprakasam ; universe ; the self-luminous ;
Thwameykam jagathkarth- Thou alone art the Creator, Protector
rupathropraharthro ; and Redeemer of the Universe ;
Thwameykam param nis- Thou alone art Supreme, immovable
chalam nirvikalpam ; and unchangeable.
3. *Bhayanam bhayambheesha-* Thou art the Terror unto the terrific,
nam bheeshananam ; the Dread unto the dreadful ;
Gathipraninam ; Pavanam The Refuge of living beings, the
pavananam ; Sanctifier of the sanctifiers ;
Mahohchai padanam Niya- Thou alone art the Regulator and
nruthwameykam ; the Ordainer of highly exalted
existences ;
Pareyshamparam raksha- Thou art the most Excellent of all
nam rakshananam excellences ; and the Protector
of the protectors.
4. *Vayamthwam smaramoh ;* We shall meditate on Thee ;
Vayamthwam bhajammoh ; We shall worship Thee ;
Vayamthwam jagath sakshi We shall salute Thee who are the
rupam namamaha Eternal Witness of the universe ;
Sadeykam nidanam nira- O Thou, the one only Truth, the prime-
lambameesein val Cause of the universe, wholly Self-
Reliant, the Unsupported, Lord of all.
Bhavambhothi potham We take shelter in Thee as the
Saranya vramaha. ferry to ford the ocean of births.
5. *Asathoma sathgamaya ;* From untruth, lead us to truth ;
Thamasoma jyothirgamaya From darkness, lead us to light ;
Mruthyorma amritham- From death, lead us to immortality ;
gamaya ;
Aviravirma yedhi ; O Self - manifesting One, manifest
Thyself to us ;
Rudrayatheya dakshina- O Thou, the awe-inspiring One,
mukham ; Theynamam protect us for ever by turning
pahiniikyam. Thy Grace-lit Face towards us.

The last verse is taken from the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad and is known as the famous "*Pavamana Mantram*" which may be interpreted in modern theistic lore as under :—

Lead us out of all untruth—sham and show, fashion and pretension—into the truth, certitude and reality of wisdom, sympathy, fellowship, trust. Wisely guide us out of darkness—prejudice, selfishness, self-seeking, pride, conceit—into the light, the holy vision of Thy face, the manifestation of Thy presence, the revelation of Thy purpose. Graciously lift us out of death—apathy, unconcern, heartlessness, passion, hatred, malice, inhumanity, godlessness—into the immortality of divine life, holy communion, disinterested service, consecrated duty, devoted love.

O Thou, the Self-Revealing One, do Thou reveal Thyself unto us! Make us Thy mirror, the prism through which Thy charm is radiated! Oh! Thou, the awe-inspiring One, Thou, the resplendent One, do Thou in Thy inexhaustible radiance shed the smile of Thy Countenance on our craving hearts! Deliver us from the fear of death! Fortify us against the inroads of temptations and cherish us for ever in the embrace of Thy loving protection.

Again, it is God's love that creates in man a craving for worship, yearning to realise Him and to flee into the embrace of the Divine Parent. He prompts and urges in our heart the desire to worship Him. He sees and rejoices to see in our worship the fulfilment of His purpose that in us His love should be multiplied and He should create the home of peace and the shrine of love.

In worship we approach God, not as subject to king, or abject to autocrat, or beggar to benefactor, or debtor to creditor, or suppliant to avenger, but as child to parent with a clear claim to His love and care. Our prayer is not a distant petition for divine charity; it is the pilgrim's progress in divine love. In the dusk of the primitive past, man feared

God and crouched and trembled in His presence. But in the clear dawn of our day, we bow down to Him not in the trembling fear of the criminal, not in the baffled awe of the thoughtless, no, not even in the charmed rapture of the adoring; but in the sweet, indescribable beatitude of finite souls wedded to the Infinite. We are privileged to glimpse the beaming Face of the Deity everywhere. Says Rishi Svetesvatara "His Eye is everywhere, His Face is everywhere, His Hand is everywhere and His Foot is everywhere." Says the Rishi of the Taittiriya Upanishad.—"Who would move or who would live if the Supreme Being were not in the universe as Love. It is He indeed who inspires Love." Such is the omnipresence, such is the love felt by the pious Rishis that they worshipped Him "In any place wherein the mind feels undisturbed," thereby showing that there should never be any distinction made as to the locality where alone God must be worshipped. Wherever the body be, if the soul can freely wing its way to the throne of God, that place is as good as any other for worship. It is said of Nanak that, when asked by a Muhammadan, how he could consistently be a religionist if he turned his feet to Mecca, the house of God, the Sage replied: "If you can, turn them towards any spot where the awful house of God is not."

If the wide world be the sacred temple of God, as implied in Nanak's rejoinder, it is deducing but a logical truth when we say that man must everywhere and always be what the whole universe at the very top of its voice ever proclaims God to be—namely holy. If we always are within the temple of a holy God, is it not desecrating that temple, is it not dishonouring the Deity within it, if any vicious act be committed, if any sinful thought be tolerated, if any impure word be uttered within the precincts of that holy place?

Another implication of Saint Nanak's saying is that the Eternal and Universal God has not got one Mecca but several

and that our pilgrimage must be to all His *theerdhas* (pilgrim-centres). Such is the indescribable love of God as realised by the Rishis that He brings and focusses all those *theerdhas* into the heart and the hearth of each one of His children. We must therefore cultivate not only the pilgrimage of going out to the sacred places of the earth but the more easy and more essential pilgrimage of entering into the inner shrine of the Self of ourselves. He whom the Rishis proclaim as *Manasamandira* (the Enshrined One in the spirits of His worshippers) does not come to us denuded of all company and stripped of all glory but surrounded by all the innumerable hosts of Heaven and compassed with all the inestimable wealth of truth, love, wisdom and righteousness.

Worship, then, is intelligent adoration of the Deity, personal attachment to the Lord. It is God-consciousness intensified into direct communion with the Inspirer and willing self-dedication to the All-Holy.

Worship is the aspiration that follows the inspiration of God, the admiration that comes of perception, the union that is begotten of sympathy, the devotion that is induced by love. Its foundations are laid on man's inner growth and conscious approach towards God ; its secret spring is in the similarity of the son and the Father ; its very starting idea is the upheaval of the soul with a divine influence.

Worship is loving God, caressing Him, rejoicing in Him, going into ecstatic delight in adoration of Him—this is the pure concentrated essence, the vital central truth of worship—loving Him for His own sake ; loving Him who is Loveable, loving Him who is Love itself.

In worship, we approach God not only with the trust of a child, as stated above, but with the trust and confidence of a wife. Not only should our soul be childlike but also woman or wife-like before it can enter paradise. Because, the trust of the child arises from diffidence ; but the trust of the wife

springs from unwillingness to act independently. The child trusts the father because it cannot help doing so ; the wife trusts the husband, because she delights to do so. The child is an independent personality ; but the true wife merges herself into and becomes one with the husband. The child separates itself when full-fledged ; but the true wife would rather die than be alone—away from her lord.

“ I'll be there,—
In death's cold wedlock by Thy side
Oh! I would ask no happier bed
Than the chill waves my Love lies under ;
Sweeter to rest together dead,
Far sweeter, than to live asunder.”

Let us not fail, however, to look at the other picture—the picture of the sunny spectacle of the mother with the babe she loves. She lifts it, washes it, cleanses it, dresses it, anoints it with fragrant scents, kisses it with rapturous smiles. The child feels and enjoys all this thrilling love and gently throws its tiny arms around the mother. That is symbolic of worship. All the mother does is as much as to say “ You are my precious darling,” and all the darling does is as much as to say “ You are my sweet mother.”

Further, the child receives the full nectarine current of life from the mother's bosom ; and that bosom which drains itself, transmuting the very life blood into the life-giving milk, feels immensely gratified as the child at that bosom conveys its silent gratitude with the gentle touch and the genial look. So does the Supreme Being receive satisfaction when we turn to Him and with adoring looks say ‘ Thou art our Mother.’ That comprises all the wealth of love and all the beauty of purity. Thus He is our Mother. We praise and glorify Him as the Mother.

Moreover, the finger of the mother held in the confident hand of the child sets the current of new life flowing from one

to the other. There is the incessant flow of confidence and assurance from the mother and of trust and tranquillity from the child. That little finger held by the tiny child is the sacred emblem of the union of the mother-soul with the child soul. The mother looks ahead; the child looks at the mother. The mother leads; the child is led. The mother wisely guides; the child trustfully keeps pace. Thus the pilgrimage is accomplished; and there is united joy. God's motherly finger held by our tiny hands brings us into a reciprocity of union with Him through all days, months and years, starts and sustains a ceaseless abundant stream of parental protection and guidance from Him and of filial dependence and submission from us. Here is the out-going and back-coming of love. Worship is, according to the Rishis, nothing but the completion of the circle of love started by God in creation. In other words, God's love goes out for man to return to God through worship. Thus there is no separate independent function super-imposed but only the reaction of the human spirit with the vow "Love shall command my love in return". And that vow is made in worship. Thus, as the circle is completed, Love going out in creation and Love returning in worship, there is the constancy of holy companionship.

As man is perfected through worship, he is gifted with a continuous enjoyment of intense, ecstatic communion and companionship with God. The thought of God becomes the vital breath of life; the presence of God shines as a cloudless vision. "Once His gifts I owned; now Him alone". When Mahammed and his two friends lay concealed in a cavern and the enemies' forces came up in hot pursuit, Abu Baker whispered, all in a tremor, "We are only three against a host!" 'Nay **four**' spontaneously avers the Prophet of God. Such is the abiding consciousness of God's presence felt by the prophets, sages and saints. So absorbing is their consciousness of His Presence that separation from Him will be not

merely a religious difficulty, a devotional discomfort but a psychological impossibility.

According to Dr. Martineau,

"Worship is the free offering of ourselves to God ; ever renewed, because ever imperfect. It expresses the consciousness that we are His by right ; yet have not duly passed into His hand ; that the soul has no true rest but in Him, yet has wandered in strange flights until her wing is tired. It is her effort to return home, the surrender again of her narrow self-will, her prayer to be merged in a life diviner than her own. It is at once the lowliest and loftiest attitude of her nature."

Worship again is the application of all our faculties to the realisation of God whether in adoration or meditation or supplication or in all the three combined. Ultimately, what is the end of religion but the reproduction, the magnifying of God in man ? Man is gradually unfolded in his divine nature as an immortal being. Our soul is the spark, the *shekinah* of God's own Self that grows and purifies but can never be put out. Hence its survival after the dissolution of the body in a higher life which is calculated to ensure the continuity of the moral and spiritual progress begun on this earth.

Worship makes man the first born of the Father's-love and the eldest child in the Father's home. Worship generates that spirit of catholic wholeness which cultivates with equal ardour reverence for the highest and regardfulness for the humblest. Worship draws the currents of creativeness into the soul of the worshipper and directs the recreated soul to recreate the world. Worship is the immediate contact, nay, the inseparable though mysterious commingling, the inalienable and ever deepening interfusion of the Master and the servant, the Preceptor and the pupil, the Deity and the devotee, the Father and the son, in all the concerns of life. The alchemy of worship transmutes the heart into the altar, the school into the sanctuary, the mill into the granary, the prison into the hospital, the sentinel's post into the steward's cabin, the prodigal's confessions into the son's confidences. As

creation of the genius of worship, the grandest edifice is a *gopuram*, the noblest monument is a mausoleum, the sublimest verse is a hymn, the pleasantest journey is a pilgrimage, the happiest assembly is a congregation.

Again, worship is the very life-blood of every religious constitution. It is the very foundation of the whole edifice of human faith. It is the royal road to Heaven. It is the cypher-key for opening the gates of the City of God. It is the passport for prompt admission into the abodes of immortality. It is a Pillar of Cloud and a Pillar of Fire to guide us across the wilderness of this world. It is the unerring clue to the perplexing labyrinth of this life. It enables us to present one invincible front to all the temptations of the flesh, to overcome with an irresistible force all the allurements of the world and to face unflinchingly all the threats of ungodly power. Above all, it sets before us the lofty ideal of self-abnegation, self-denial, self-restraint, self-sacrificing love in the place of the degrading obsession of self-aggrandisement, self-glorification, self-indulgence, and self-interest which had aforetime beguiled and enslaved us. In one word, worship is a ready and loving dedication of human energies to the service of the world as a natural concomitant to the Love of God.

Finally, the end and goal of all worship is to make and shape the devotee into the image of the Deity that naught may remain of his own self. I shall illustrate this by a thrilling anecdote which Brahma Rishi Venkata Ratnam was used to drill repeatedly into the ears of his pupils.

In the early days of Mahammadan inroads into this country, a certain town was sacked by Mahammadan troops; and as was the practice then, a rush was made towards the temple, that it might be pulled down as a sort of tribute and honour to the Lord of hosts who had given the Islamic arms the victory of the day. There was a priestess attached to the temple. She ran in, embraced the idol, pressed it to her bosom, held it close to her heart, clung to it with the

utmost confidence and trust; and she did not mind the other consequences. The troops came, ran into the holy place, and saw the woman holding fast tenaciously to the idol. They wanted to separate her from the object of her attachment and then pull down what to them was an abomination. But the woman would not let go her hold. She must live or perish with it. In helplessness and disgust, the men thought the only way to accomplish the purpose of demolishing the idol, was to put an end to the woman. Under the commander's order, a soldier drew out his sword and cut off the head of the woman. It is said that as the blood gushed out, every drop of it wore the form of the god of the idol, she worshipped. Every drop of the blood in her body was thus shaped into the image of the object of her worship. Her assassins felt astonished at this wonderful transformation in the very physical system of the woman. The wisest of the band rightly reflected: "Leave alone her errors; here is the faith that transforms the devotee into the Deity."

If we would know the true meaning of life, if our worship is to bear good fruit, if, in fact, the purpose of creation is to be realised, we should strive, ceaselessly, ardently, and with the hunger and thirst of an irrepressible passion, strive, for the realisation of the one supreme end of our life, namely, to transform the devotee into the Deity, the humanity into Divinity. How shall we practise it, how put ourselves into the normal mood and posture for it? This is thus answered by the said Brahma Rishi.

"There are many ways in which this is expressed. But, after all, the many ways resolve themselves into one single way, namely, to say, "Think not of thyself, think only of the Lord. No will of thine, only the purposes of the Lord"; and again to say, "Thy will is mine." In Narada's Bhakthi Sutras, those who adore God are divided into four classes. God is symbolised as the King; and it is said, the King has four classes of persons around and about Him: first, those who enter into His councils—the wise; second, those who serve Him—the philanthropic; third, those who entertain Him—

the good-natured ; the fourth class have no name : " the others " they are called. These last have no recommendation ; they possess no special characteristic ; they function in no capacity ; they render no service to the King ; they are useful in no way to him ; and they are called ' dependants.' They have to get their all from the pure bounty of the Lord. They are *bhaktas*. They receive everything from God ; and they have nothing to give in return. That is the position of the mind, that is the attitude of the heart, that is the peculiar state of the soul to which *sadhana* leads us. We are " the others " that have no name. What pretensions have we to that wisdom which enters into His councils ! What possessions have we to subserve His providence ? What traits of good nature have we to entertain Him ? We are ' the others,' ' the dependants,' the *bhaktas*, owing our all to Him and saying and feeling always, " I am nought ; Thou art everything." It is only thus the stubborn separate self is annihilated. That is the true Nirvana in which the egoistic self is so eliminated that the Supreme One is All-in-all and shines forth in His radiant and enrapturing beauty. " Annihilate yourself that you may have salvation ;" says a renowned Sufi, " When you go away, Truth (*haq, satyam*) will be seated in your place."

The true spirit of worship is the sacrifice, the entire effacement of the sense-bewitched self, with its desires and cravings, until the soul learns completely to confide, and joyfully to possess its all, in God. Man's career in life ought to be like the railway-journey of a little child—with no ticket to purchase, no berth to reserve, no luggage to book, no provisions to carry ; seated on the mother's lap, nourished from the mother's bosom, secure in the mother's arms, restful under the mother's smiles, the darling cherub is conveyed to its destination, which is, after all, the material mansion ; enjoying the freedom from care that a sage would covet and commanding a solicitousness of service that a prince would envy. Truly, the full formation of this child-spirit is the perfection of the *sadhan* of worship.

Accordingly, worship and sacrifice are interchangeable terms. Worship is sacrifice ; sacrifice is worship ; and sacrifice is the earnest of salvation. How—it may be asked?

It is the apparent insignificance, the seeming aimlessness of human life that constitutes the tragedy of tragedies. And it is for this ancient enigma, this persistent puzzle—namely, that good appears to come to grief, while evil seems to triumph—that wisdom has to find a solution. What is the end of life? Happiness—is that the answer? What is the end of life? Possessions and self and power—is that the answer? What is the end of life? Knowledge, insight, penetration, faith, trust, wisdom, resolution, labour—is that the answer? Which of these is the right answer? As the old man bowed down with the weight of years, when asked why he was engaged in that absurd task of planting a little sapling at his age, replied that he followed those who had gone before him and had planted trees the fruits of which he reaped. So, wise men and true do not always plant for themselves. Our realisation, our redemption, lies not in what we may reap ourselves but what others may reap from our labours. If we ask ourselves the question, namely, which of the two will be honourable—to die a creditor or debtor, every manly soul amongst us will promptly answer, ‘of course a creditor.’ Then the supreme lesson for us is so to live as to gift, with some thing sound and wholesome, those who come after us, instead of our carrying away more than our due portion. The oldest of our Scriptures, the *Rig Veda*, inculcates the same truth of self-sacrifice as exemplified by the *Parama Purusha* Himself in the very act of cosmic creation. The cradle of the universe is rocked by self-sacrifice. This is the significance also of the cross. In Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress*, there is a character named *Faithful*. He is executed on a cross. Symbolically, Bunyan places, at the foot of that cross, a cradle with a new born babe in it whose name is, not *Faithful* but *Hopeful*. On the cross the Faithful give up the life; at its foot the Hopeful come into life. The cross of the lofty souled is the fountain spring, the vital strength, of the humble spirited in that it indicates, by means of an impressive example, the justice

of the basic principle of our life, even that of life made perfect through sacrifice, through ready suffering for others' happiness. This is that blessedness, as distinguished from, and exalted above, mere happiness which is the end and aim of our life. Here we may recall that very suggestive legend that, as the ocean was churned, one of the objects that came up was the *halahalam*. The poison had to be drunk by some one. And he who drank it could proclaim, '*Sivam sivam*.' Evermore, he alone who drinks up the *halahalam* of human sorrows and sufferings can pronounce the benediction—*Sivam*, Peace. He alone can say, I have swallowed the poison, that you may have peace and happiness; I have given up my life that you may come to full free life. Siva achieves *sivam*, because He is *Hara*, the Destroyer of all-consuming selfishness. He alone can say, Peace, Peace: Thus true worship is sacrifice itself and sacrifice is the earnest of Salvation as observed by Brahma Rishi Venkataratnam.

CHAPTER XV.

THE RISHIS' PERCEPTION OF GOD AS ANANDAM, LOVE ITSELF.

In the discourse to his wife Maitreyi, Rishi Yajnavalkya (*Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*) states: "*Verily a husband is not dear that you may love the husband; but that you may love the Self, therefore a husband is dear.*" Likewise, says he, wife, sons, wealth, the Brahman class, the Kshatriya class, worlds, devas, creatures are not dear that we may love them, but that we may love the Self, these and all other things are dear. This remarkable verse embodying, as it does, one of the sublime truths that has ever proceeded from the lips of man, forms the basis of the Upanishadic doctrine of love. The substance of this teaching is that self-love is love in its primary form. As the self is inner, nearer and more valuable than all other objects, it is the dearest of all.

thinking people regard the self as a small thing confined to the body; but really it is something very large. Things that we conceive as beyond it are really in it, indissolubly united to it. In their real nature all things are the self,---not distinct selves but parts or manifestations of one Infinite Self. Therefore, other objects are dear only because they are united to the Self. There is no not-self, all things being included in an all-comprehending Self---the same self that we call our own self, but seen in its true and total aspect. Consequently, to regard any being or thing as not-self, and hate him or it as such, as "not my own" is the result of ignorance. As proportion as we acquire true wisdom and the real nature of the self is revealed to us, the being or thing formerly hated and disregarded draws our love. In one word, when all things are known as the Self, all objects become dear for the sake of Self.

The love of Self which Yajnavalkya recognised as the source of all other forms of love, is a much deeper, more comprehensive and more fundamental thing than what appears in his description of it. It is the source not only of all domestic and social life, but really of creation itself, of the manifestation of the Absolute as the world of men and things.

Thus all associations and relations, all ties and bonds in human society have for their vitalising source and their justifying end the goodness and the glory of God. And the purpose and mission of religion is to teach and train each one to realise every relationship as thus established in God. When thus accepted, valued and cherished, every relation installs love as the only rule of conduct, love which knows neither envy nor boasting, is not self-seeking nor takes pleasure in any evil, is kindly in sympathy with others, and has faith in their goodness, bears with the faults of others, believes loyally in its friends, always takes the hopeful view, patiently endures through wrong and misunderstanding. There cannot be any other rule or criterion by which to judge

any value. True love is an emotion, a strong emotion impelling us to confer the best possible good upon the object of our love, to be occupied only with that. It is absolutely unselfish and opposed to all selfishness. It seeks no reward but the success of its endeavour to do good. It shuns no pain, no sacrifice, in that endeavour; and all the pain, all the sacrifice involved, only increases the rapture of its indulgence. Love does not merely bring happiness to the loving soul as a consequence of its endeavours. It is happiness in itself. It is happiness to feel the mere impulse. It is greater happiness still to gratify it by effort. Let us note more especially its perfect disinterestedness. The love of a mother for her babe is a recognised type of that perfectly unselfish love. This, in the purely animal sphere, is shared likewise by all creatures towards their tender offspring. But in the higher human sphere, the love of parents for their children, when it is pure, is always disinterested. The children's true welfare is pursued with faithful steadfastness and at the cost of personal sacrifices such as are known only to true fathers and mothers. They do not look for a *quid pro quo*, for any return except the success of their loving endeavours to promote their children's well-being. The highest praise ever given by one man to another is to say, "He was a father to me." or to a woman, "She was like a mother." True fatherly and motherly love is the highest form in which love can be manifested to us, and this has often been shown by men and women who have never had any children of their own. This is why we have felt that the name of Fāthēr is the best and highest *Name* which has ever been given to God. Love is thus more than conscientiousness, although it includes conscientiousness at every step. It is conscientiousness glorified by a delight and eagerness in performance. Love leaps up to do gladly what mere sense of duty would drive us to perform in a half-hearted way. Love turns all drudgery into a delight, and immensely adds to its list of duties the conferring of benefits

far beyond the maximum demanded by a moral code. Love, too, quickens our anxiety to find out what is best to be done, will not let us leave it to chance or reckless speed whether or how relief or benefit should be conferred. Love thus expands the Conscience and quickens the Reason and even on this ground alone it would rightfully claim the supremacy over the whole man.

We know also that the worst sorrows and sins of the world come through lack of love and that the best joys and the richest blessings flow from love alone and that if love ruled in every heart, earth would be no longer an earth but a heaven more full of gladness than poets or angels have ever sung.

In this connection, I am reminded of a pretty anecdote of Chinese origin, that a certain seeker after truth presented himself before a revered teacher and said—"Can you sum up all the books for me in one word?" The prompt reply was *Reciprocity*, which may be paraphrased into '*Amavath-sarvabhoothani*' and again into—'do unto others as you would be done by.' This was the sum total of the whole moral code condensed into that one word—*Reciprocity*. Similarly, the essence of the whole body of religious truth could be distilled into one single word '*charity*' in the classic sense of *love*. The greatest thing in the world is Love; the noblest quality is Love; the only saving grace is Love; the only adorable virtue is Love. And Love weaves itself into so many—why, into all the concerns and occupations of life.

We have seen in Chapter XI *supra* that the Supreme Being is the inner-self of all (*Sarvantharyami*). Likewise, the Rishi of the *Isopanishad* says: "*He who sees all things in the Self and the Self in all things does not hate any one for that reason.*" To Him there is no not-self and so nothing which is not dear. All objects become dear to him not for their sake but

for the sake of the Supreme Self that exists in them. Another Rishi in the *Brihadaranyaka* avers the same truth when he says: "*This which is nearer to us than anything, this Self is dearer than a son, dearer than wealth, dearer than all else. If one were to say to one who declares another than the Self dear that he will lose what is dear to him, very likely it would be so. Let him worship the Self alone as dear. He who worships the Self alone as dear, the object of his love never perishes.*" Thus the keynote of all that is said or sung by the Rishis is the exceeding Love of God towards all men and the correlative duty and privilege of the latter of trusting in Him with our whole heart. The Rishis go a step further and proclaim—"*From His Love surely all these beings are born; by His Love created beings are sustained and into His Love, they proceed and enter.*"

Accordingly, the metaphysics of creation can be satisfactorily expounded only on the principle of *Love* which connotes both the ardour and the resource—the wish and the will—the design and the delight—to create. All other possibilities of activity stop short somewhere. It is love alone that constitutes the ceaseless spring—the inexhaustible reserve of both the wisdom and the power to create.

Therefore it is, it is said, that as against the scientist with his law and system, the philosopher with his cause and consequence and the historian with his process and result, the religionist, the man of faith, alone rightly appraises the universe as the emanation—the self-expression of Divine Love. It is not the Power, not the Wisdom, not the Omnipresence—none of these noteworthy attributes of God, but it is His *Love* and Love alone is declared to furnish a valid explanation for the existence of the universe and provide an adequate ground and an enduring stamina for it. Power may create, but cannot design. Wisdom may plan, but cannot create. Similarly, the other modes of possible Divine self-expression will be found rather circumscribed in some way. It is His all-comprehensive Love—

Love into which enters the wisdom, not of cunning inquisition but of penetrating insight—Love into which flows the might, not of the propelling machine but of the evolving spirit—that can account for the creation of the world. The Rishis declare that the whole building material of the universe is *His Love*. If creation is His life-garment, *His Love* forms the warp and woof of that translucent fabric. **The Taittiriya Upanishad reaches the loftiest heights of philosophical speculation when it declares God not as Anandi, possessing love, but as Anandam, Love itself—“Brahma Kripahi Kevalam.”** Considering the age in which he lived, we are struck with wonder at the profound vision of the Rishi who succeeded through self-knowledge, intensified by deep meditation, in realising Love as the Ultimate Reality of the Universe. In other words, what the Rishi proclaims is that Love is the final purpose of God’s universe, love of man for man in an all-embracing brotherhood, love of man to God as the profoundest and loftiest of human affections and that both these spring out of God’s own love of love and delight in love, and in particular His ever flowing love for the children of men.

The Taittiriya Upanishad is one of the most important of the Upanishads being almost on a par with *Chandogya* and *Brihadaranyaka*. It is noted for its exposition of the doctrine of *Panchakosās* (the five sheaths) in which the finite soul or the human personality, which according to the Vedanta is essentially one with the Infinite, is encased and which constitute its individuality; no less than for its grand proclamation that the ultimate Reality, the fullest and highest manifestation behind the visible universe, is *Anandam*, the correct English word for which, according to Dr. Rabindranath Tagore, is *Love*. In other words, after a searching analysis of the constitution of the universe, the Rishi of this Upanishad leads us, step by step, from matter to life, from life to mind, from mind to self-consciousness and from self-

consciousness to *Anandam* and declares that *God is Love itself, Brahma kripahi kevalam*. Love is His name, Love is His form; Love is His very essence. This deserves to be called the highest revelation so far vouchsafed to a divinely-illuminated soul. From Love, all beings are born and by Love all created beings live and into Love, they all enter on leaving this earth. All the succeeding centuries of wonderful progress in science and philosophy have not been able to outgrow this *finding* of the Rishi of this Upanishad, that *Brahman is Anandam*. The author of the *Brahma Sutras* unequivocally declares that *Ananda Maya* of Taittiriya Upanishad is the Brahman, the Blissful, the Supreme Self.

This Upanishad is divided into three parts called *Vallis*, i.e. Creepers. **The first Valli (called the Siksha Valli)** is more archaic and appears to be primarily a treatise of the forest school and is not of much vedantic importance.

The second Valli called the Brahmananda Valli constitutes the scriptural basis of the Vedantic doctrine of Panchakoshas, the five sheaths, develops the conception of Brahman as Love and extols the bliss of Divine Communion over all other forms of happiness. The Rishi realised that behind matter, there was a subtler and higher reality, viz., life and behind life he realised a still higher and higher reality. Thus, step by step, he rose from the conception of matter to that of life, from life to sensorium, from sensorium to understanding and from understanding to Ananda (bliss) which is the highest Reality. These various stages make a wonderful and glorious gradation, a holy hierarchy, for the perfection of humanity in the sonship of divinity—the material *subserving* the mental, the mental *subserving* the moral, the moral *subserving* the spiritual, the spiritual *subserving* the eternal. These graduated conceptions are known in the Vedantic language as the *Panchakoshas* or the five sheaths in which the human entity or the ego, the partial and finite reproduction of the Supreme Self, is encased. (Please see Chapter x, *supra*)

The five kosas enunciated by the Rishi bespeak a very profound analysis of the mystery of existence. The Annamaya kosa represents the material sub-stratum of the universe. Deeper and higher than this is the Pranamaya kosa or the world of life. Higher still is the sub-stratum of mind or consciousness—that mysterious something which marks the transition from vegetable to animal life. Deeper still is the sub-stratum of Vijnanamaya kosa which indicates self-consciousness, reason, understanding conscience. Highest of all is the sub-stratum of Anandamaya kosa which betokens Love, the highest element in man and in the universe.

The third Valli called the Brîgu Valli or Bhargava aruna Vidya is more or less an amplification or rather an emphatic, illustrative expression of the truth inculcated in the second Valli in the form of a dialogue between Rishi aruna and his son Brîgu, expounding as it does, how the individual self through meditation ascends from the most elementary conception of the Supreme Cause to higher and higher ones till it attains liberation and immortality in the absolute.

In the evolution of religious thought, the gradual penetration into the heart of the ultimate reality of the universe from matter onwards is significant. There can be no doubt that the Aryan mind went deeper and deeper in search of the mystery of the universe and the successive stages along which it marched are correct. It is but natural that at first matter was looked upon as the ultimate reality; but deeper meditation revealed, as already indicated above, that behind matter, there was a more mysterious reality, *viz.*, life; and further deeper than life was mind; above mind, the Taitiriya Upanishad recognises a still higher reality which is called the understanding or reason, which is the principle which distinguishes man from animals; and the highest of all, the Supreme Reality, is *Anandam*. This Anandam (Love) is

declared to be the highest Reality, by which all else is sustained.

This *Anandam*, Immortal Love, expresses Himself in *Joy* form (*Anandarupamamritamyadvibhati*). His manifestation in creation is out of His fulness of Joy. It is the nature of this abounding Joy to realise itself in form. The joy which is without form must create, must translate itself into form. The joy of the singer, says Dr. Rabindranath Tagore, is expressed in the form of a song, that of the poet in the form of a poem. Man in his role of a creator, is ever creating forms and they come out of his abundance of joy. This joy, whose other name is love, says the Doctor, must, by its very nature, have duality for its realisation. When the singer has his inspiration, he makes himself into two; he has within him his other self as the hearer and the outside audience as merely the extension of the other self of his. The lover seeks his own other self in his beloved. It is joy that makes this separation in order to realise through obstacles the union.

The Supreme Being therefore assumes the form of *Joy* everywhere. He is the Evangel of *Joy*. He is all *Joy*. The earth beneath is His *Joy*; the sky above is His *Joy*. Oceans and waves are His *Joy*. The numberless objects which make the world beautiful are again the manifestation of His *Joy*. Every shining star, every smiling flower, every flowing brook, every snowy mountain, is the laughter of His *Joy*. Every sounding grove is the music of His *Joy*. The hills skip, the valleys shout, the rivers resound, the trees quiver, fish, bird, and beast rejoice before Him, the God of *Joy*. The glowing dawn and the rising morn are the first gleams of His returning *Joy*. The retiring sun with golden sheen in the west is His retreating *Joy*. Day and night are but His alternating *Joy*. Spring and summer, autumn and winter are His revolving *Joy*. Man is but the little ray that has emerged from the central glow of His *Joy*. The father is

the overlooking *Joy*; the mother the embracing *Joy*; brother sister the twin-born *Joy*; teacher or preceptor the self-producing *Joy*; comrade or colleague the self-sharing *Joy*; husband or wife the self-gifting *Joy*; daughter or son the self-perfecting *Joy*. Thus all is His *Joy*, *Love*, *Anandam*, within and without. In one word, this extensive expanse of the universe is His own sacred fane always open-doored to waft in and wave the hourly *harathy* of His *Joy*.

Says Saint Kabir in one of his poems—

“The Creator brought into being the Game of *Joy*. The earth is His *Joy*; His *Joy* is the sky; His *Joy* is the shining of the sun and the moon; His *Joy* is the beginning, the middle and the end; His joy is eyes, darkness and light. Mountains and waves are His joy. His joy the Sarasvati, the Yamuna and the Ganges. His play the land and water, the whole universe. In play is the creation spread out. In play it is established. The whole world rests in His play, but the Player remains unknown.”

Such is the experience, the surging, irrepressible, as it were, the self-revealing experience of this saint who has in *Anandam* at the centre, the core, the heart, the fountain-head of the universe. Where is the possibility, the bare conceivability of the coming into being of any creature unless the all-investing sky and the all-sustaining earth be brimful of joy? Even as the universe is replete, redolent with joy, the right of existence is possible. Where there is joy, there must be direct communion. Where there is joy, there must be ceaseless intercourse. Where there is joy, there is a holiness which gives even to the most insignificant and neglected objects a value which cannot be estimated by any human calculation. Where there is the joyful realisation of God, where all that comes of God, lives in God, moves and has its being in God, is received as joy, and welcomed as the offering of joy.

When we cast back our glance over the whole range of the story of the universe and perceive that from the primeval chaos, the Divine Power behind nature has been slowly and surely preparing the world to be the abode of love and training mankind to that great end, we are led to the inescapable conclusion that this and no other has been the supreme purpose of God from the first till now, always and everywhere. The solution of the problem of the universe, according to the Rishis, is therefore *Love* and the answer to the universal and everlasting "*Why*" which the intellect of man is for ever asking is, "For the sake of Love."

Love alone is fecund, productive, multiplicative, reciprocative. Accordingly, the first implication of Love is that creation can be accounted for only as the offspring of Love. This has been the message of the great, the inspired ones of all ages and countries. Everywhere, the true seer has declared that God moved by impelling Love has brought the world into being. We have to recognise this as the essence of religion that God figures forth in creation, unfolds the process of evolution, converges into the harmony of a multiplex unity and for ever abides in love and manifests Himself in love and therefore becomes accessible only through and unto love. In other words, creation originates in Love; creation grows and expands in Love; creation fulfils and perfects itself in Love. We apprehend the true object of life only when we realise creation as the joyous self-expression of Love, *Anandam*. The object of creation is to broadcast this *Anandam*, this divine delight, all over the universe. To this end, say the Rishis, God has begotten the human soul, has made the body its present abode and has surrounded it with the universe. This universe, incomparable as a sign of wisdom and a symbol of beauty, could be conceived as the glory of God only by the human soul. Man alone with his knowledge of immortality, with his sweep and flight of an ever-growing person, can comprehend the Father, can

love, consciously obey and be united with the Father. And as the son, he can find his true satisfaction in the Father alone as sharing the love, the *Anandam* of the father. According to Jalalud-din Rumi,

“ When in this heart, the lightning spark of Love arises,
Be sure this Love is reciprocated in that Heart ;
When the Love of God arises in thy heart,
Without doubt, God also feels Love for thee.”

Accordingly, the Rishis proclaim that the law of the universe itself is Love. God has ordained the self-same law unto us all. We should determine all standards of valuation in the spirit of love. We should accept love as the prime law of our life, even as God in His own governance rules according to the universal law of Love. All other so-called laws are not God's ordained edicts but man's misreading of God's ways. The law of barbarism with its tooth for tooth and eye for eye, the law of reciprocity with its give and take, even the law of equality with its “I as thee and thou as me”,—all these merely temporise more or less. In truth, there is one and only one section in the Code of God, namely, Love. From inception to perfection, it is all “ *give love, live love.*” Love never asks for any return or recognition.

Love is the season and salt of every human aspiration, of every thing in the world. What talismanic effect has that small word upon every heart ! How potent a combining element it is, binding soul to soul, heart to heart, mind to mind, object to object, welding all the universe into a homogeneous whole !

Love endears home, sweetens society, creates patriotism and true hero-like courage, inspires love for all and fills one with deep admiration and reverence for God. Love is the source and spring of all Duty and Duty is the basis of all gospels and the substance of all religion. To love God with all our strength, mind and heart, and always to do unto

all others more than what we would that they should do unto us—this is the sum total of all virtue and all piety.

God's love to us transcends the most intensive love of human father. It is His ever-encompassing love that protects us in all conditions of our life—wakefulness, oblivion and sleep. In the battlefield of daily life where deadly foes have to be confronted and vanquished, He, with thrilling commands, guides our movements and saves us from danger. At all times, and at every step, His besetting Spirit is our Guide, Refuge and Comforter. We know no other guardian, no other protector.

How abundant is His love, ample as the world, far-reaching as the universe! The remotest stars are the tokens of His love. The deepest depths of the abysmal sea are but the recesses of His Love. The struggles of sin are but the evidences of His love. The pangs of the sorrowing are but the manifestations of His love.

To deliver this message of love and to enjoin this self-dedication is the office of Religion. Formularies repeated by rote cannot meet the demand for the individual apprehension of the truth that the soul's origination, continuation, evolution, destination, perfection, all are in and through Love. And Love necessarily implies, invariably relates to a Loving being. Impersonal love is a myth. Love that is not felt by, is not the emotion of a living being, is all moonshine. Any talk of love abstracted from conscious life—pure, noble life, is a jugglery in words. Cherishing true love, we must be devoted to a Loving Being and perform actions dear unto Him.

Besides, all rightness among men, all union with God, all faithful following of the lives of the world's worthies depend upon our active obedience to this law of Love. All the suffering of the world results from man's disbelief of it, from man's disobedience to it. All the joy of the whole world

past, present, and to come, has risen, will arise from obedience to this law. The law of Love is the central energy of the spiritual universe, emanating from the Infinite Will of God. Wherever it is obeyed, joy leaps up like a fountain. In daily life, it creates the habit of thinking and living for others rather than for oneself, of the active desire to give and bless, of help and sympathy, of kindness and graciousness, of self-forgetfulness. With the practice of it, grace and joy and brightness illuminate the face, speak through the manners, irradiate the speech, make beautiful the common action and adorn the trials of life with unexpected charm. There is nothing more enchanting than the brightness of one who is not thinking of himself. Love endures in illness, conquers decay, makes old age beautiful as youth. It passes through death with an exultant knowledge that it will live for ever with a Love higher than its own. Love never ails. The humblest creature that loves purely and unselfishly is nobler a thousand times than the philosopher whose nature responds to no touch of sympathy. He who loves can play like a child on the verge of eternity. Indeed, the true lover is himself eternal. He is in God and God is in him and God is love.

As Ramakrishna Paramahansa has observed, God's love may be likened to a magnet. It attracts man to Him as a magnet attracts iron. As, however, iron thickly embedded in dust becomes impervious to the attraction of the magnet, so the human soul, heavily enveloped in its own sin, becomes insensible to the attraction of the Lord. But when the mud is washed away with water, the iron is free to move and responds to the magnet, even so, when the soul's sin is washed away by constant tears of prayer and repentance, man soon feels the attraction of God and realises his unity with Him.

It is therefore wrong to believe, as unfortunately some do, that man was conceived in sin and born in iniquity

into this world to be a child of endless divine wrath and an inheritor of everlasting sinfulness and punishment. On the other hand, man is truly and really the very off-spring of God's Holy Spirit ; every man is God's truly begotten son, born with the inheritance of the Divine. By birth-right, by the very nature of our being, we are His sons and daughters, not ransomed and adopted, but born into His family and certain sooner or later to become holy even as He is holy and to inherit all the bliss which belongs to moral perfection.

God, being Love, the whole Love, and nothing but Love Himself, has made man the partaker of this unspeakable gift. Love in man is accordingly the second sight with which he can behold the priceless pearl in the dew-drop, enjoy regal glory in the rainbow and treasure flowers as the love missives of the Beloved inscribed in coloured ink on living enamel.

It follows therefore that in all His vast creation around us, the human heart, which the Rishis describe as "*The City of Brahman with five gates*," is dear unto God as His favourite abode, as His sweet home and the human soul is elected of Him as His sacred shrine, as the Holy of Holies. Notwithstanding our countless blemishes, deformities and impurities, He, the *Brahmandanadha*, the Lord Supreme of the whole cosmic cycle of being, establishes Himself in the heart and soul as an ever-besetting and fragrant Reality. Is it given to us to receive and enthrone Him as the Lord of our hearts? Yes ; it is vouchsafed even to the vilest of sinners thus to instal Him in the heart, be it ever so stained and contaminated with the blackest of sins. He is not a God to condemn and reject ; but He is the God to cleanse and brighten, to revive and restore, to forgive and re-embrace. He comes uninvited ; He abides with the intense eagerness of personal solicitude and if the front door is perversely shut against Him, He manages to enter into each individual by the

back door ; and thus He fulfils His purpose of sanctification in the heart and soul of every one of His children.

The base passions, He transmutes into graceful amenities and self-sacrificing activities. The gloom of egotism, He illumines into the light of self-reverence. The frailty of the flesh, He shapes into the strength of peace and patience. Thus, He comes in as the Re-vivifier, the Re-invigorator, the Re-illuminator and the Re-deemer and assumes unto Himself all our uselessness, worthlessness and even baseness and by the alchemy of grace, fuses them into miraculous adaptation to His holy purpose of universal redemption and sanctification. For the accomplishment of this, His benevolent design, He makes use of every Judas that betrays his master, every Peter that denies his lord, every high priest that gives a wicked judgment, every time-server that passes an unjust sentence, in fact of everything that to us is untoward and apparently unjust, ungrateful, hard-hearted and cruel.

What the world despises, disregards, condemns, casts away, that the Lord of Love feelingly, lovingly takes unto Himself, cleanses pure, renders whole, exalts high and presents to the world as a miracle of His never-ending Mercy and Grace. It is His Mercy that beholds the incipient Valmiki, in a notorious high way robber, the prince of Christian apostles in Saul, the truculent persecuting bigot. And such is the marvel of His Mercy that importing Himself, into us through a thousand means and media, He unceasingly seeks to bring it home to us that we are nestled and nursed in His Mercy and our blessedness ever lies in turning to Him and declaring with adoring souls : " Thou art the God of Mercy. When I have Thee, I have my all." What avails it, if position, power, pelf, all that the world prizes and covets, comes to us, but does not bring with it, ' Oh, the comforting, cheering, entrancing joy that all that comes to us is from Him, and should be received as from Him, and rendered thanks for unto Him. And

what matters it if all that the world in the infatuations of the moment and the day clings to as the very essence of life, vanishes into mere mist, if only unto our so-called bereaved hearts is vouchsafed the assurance and the resultant joy that all may be lost, but God is not, can never be lost. Aye, all may vanish, only that thereby God may vision Himself the more gloriously.

Even as through the pervasiveness of His Providence man-condemned filth becomes strength-imparting manure and the manure becomes life-enriching sap and the sap becomes soul-gladdening flower, so our very iniquities and abominations are all caught up in the all-purifying purpose of His Holy Spirit and rendered so beneficent that even through the tears of penitence sparkles the radiance of His redeeming holiness.

Immaculate and resplendent in Himself, yet tenderly clement towards His creatures, He makes us pure and wins us unto Him. In this reunion—the recall and the return—we find in Him our Father Supreme and Mother Divine and we receive Him, embrace Him and prostrate ourselves before Him. May His Righteousness and Love, Purity and Peace breathe perfume over the whole of our existence and may the details of our daily life in all its spheres be redolent of His Divine Sweetness !

According to the Rishis, it is God's love that is the centre and the circumference, the be-all and end-all of creation. It is His love which is the beaming smile of congratulation in good fortune, the kindred tear-drop shed in secret at genuine sorrow, the helping hand at hard struggle, the gracious approval and welcome at anything well done, when the odds are against the doer. It is His love which evolves from the bosom of man all those noble qualities which make life a pleasure. It is His love that makes our burdens light, turns our duties into pleasure and all drudgery into a delight.



It is His love that transforms the world into a paradise fairer than the fabled Eden.

How versatile is the genius of Love? In a well-known Sanscrit verse, one type of Love—the wife-love—is symbolised in its several phases. How many claims to affection and esteem close in the true wife? In carrying out behests, she is the faithful maid; in helping with counsel, she is the wise minister; in enduring hardships and privations, she is the patient earth; in engaging with winsomeness, she is the charming nymph; in providing with comforts, she is the fostering mother; and so on. Equally ample and varied in its adaptability to the exigencies of life is every other type of God's love. Love is the soul's celestial *Cornucopia*, the soul's heavenly *kalpataru*. Love is the food of the immortals, observes Narada.

It is God's Love that prompts us to overcome evil with good, to return good for evil which is the highest privilege of a human soul and the nearest approach we can ever make to Him, our Divine Father. No man can stand higher in the scale of humanity than he who is brave enough, God-like enough to love his enemies and to echo the prayer on the cross of one of His most exalted Sons, *the Martyred Saint of Sorrows*: "Father, forgive them, for they know not, what they do." That character so full of ethical vigour, gentleness, tenderness, serene godliness, so rich in compassion, so prompt to forgiveness, and so submissive in agony, so confiding in God, in humanity and in futurity, will for ever endure as the type and symbol of what is most sublime in the heart of man. This noble character has been exhibited repeatedly in the lives and deaths of millions all over the world. Wherever found, it still claims the admiration and wins the homage of every human heart and is the crowning glory of the human race.

In our own land, we have notable instances of how evil was overcome with good. I shall cite one taken from the

life of the Maharashtra saint, Tukaram. Among the villages over which Tukaram's preaching tours extended was a place called Lohagava. There was a brazier, Sivaji Kansar by name, who had an intense love and admiration for the saint. Every time Tukaram went there, the brazier would close shop and wait upon and spend his whole time with the *Bhakta*. But this was not to the liking of the good woman, the brazier's wife. She resolved to wreak vengeance upon the destroyer of her fair prospects. In one of his tours, the saint was induced to have a warm bath; the saint sits down to bathe, and the enraged woman pours down water, scalding hot, upon the meek devotee. But Tukaram's mind remains unruffled. A true saint, according to the ideal of Hindu teaching, is one who minds not the difference between pleasure and pain. To regard as a God-send all but what has been wilfully courted is the test of true religion. Tukaram utters no words but those of prayer and supplication to the All-merciful for relief from the suffering. Here the old victory of patience over envy and ill-will is once more achieved. It is the vengeful Jove and not the suffering Prometheus that eventually fails; it is Judas and not Jesus that is worsted in the unholy struggle. The almost super-human calmness with which Tukaram had borne the brazier's wife's mal-treatment effected a radical change in the woman's nature; and the husband and the wife thenceforth joined the small band of Tukaram's most faithful followers. Thus did virtue and innocence come out triumphant everywhere. True worth and excellence may for a time be thrown into the shade; but in this world of solid realities which has an Almighty, Eternal enemy of injustice and untruth, for its Creator and Ruler nothing but truth and righteousness carries the day finally.

God is the Love whose Voice we hear in the silent hour of meditation. He is the Love that lifts up the lowly to the reach of the lofty. He is the Love that makes kings

find their highest pleasure in the prosperity of their subjects. He is the Love that deposits the possibilities of the future in the hidden caves of men's minds. He is the Love that makes the wealth of the wealthy a trust for the poor. He is that unobtrusive Love which permeates the calm, tranquil relations that form the ground work of society and binds all classes of men. The love of man for man, the kindness of a glance, the pressure of a hand, an enquiry in illness, an acknowledgment of a favour, are the outcome of God's love for man. As fire kindles fire, as light produces light, So His Love begets love. His Love is a tremendous world-compelling power like gravitation, like electricity, like vitality.

God is that love, sympathy, nay agony which Sakya-Muni felt in the sufferings of all animal and human life, which Jesus Christ felt in the fate of the fallen and lost, which Chaitanya felt in the godless condition of the millions around him, which Howard felt in the degradation of prison population, which Raja Rammohan Roy felt in the burning alive of Hindu widows on the funeral pyre of their husbands, which Lincoln felt in the misery of the Negro slave, which Miss Nightingale felt in the excruciating pain of the wounded in war.

All that the ages have recorded, all that the sages have visioned, all that the saints have realised, all that the prophets have proclaimed—all are but the manifestations of His Love. The firm earth under the foot, the canopied firmament over the head, the embracing atmosphere penetrating every pore of the body, the green and gold that adorn the face of the globe spring after spring—these all are the world-wide expressions, even divine messages unto our souls of His clemency, His benignity, His parental attachment unto every one of us.

Again His love is of wisdom. Even as He is loving, He discloses Himself to be wise, dispassionately wise, eter-

nally wise, forecasting the future, anticipating the needs, supplying the desires, tending only to improve us, refusing to grant those that harm us, impelling us to seek that which benefits us, surrounding us with a whole world as a teaching school in an infinite object lesson, training every faculty and calling forth every power and turning every opportunity to good account. It is no love that is not inseparably, organically, incorporated with wisdom. Else it were not love of the soul but mere impulse of the sense. We have heard of the tame bear which, eager to scare away the annoying flies from the face of its sleeping master, hurled a big stone and thus crushed the head! Similarly we may recall the story of the two women who claimed each to be the mother of a child—how the pretentious one was quite willing to have the babe cut into two parts and divided between the claimants; while the true mother would as readily forgo her claim and save the child's life. "Carry the point" urges false love; "Save the main issue," pleads true love. Thus true love is always wise in the interests of the object of love. The God of Love is therefore the God of wisdom.

Unto the hungry, He gives food. Unto the lonely, He grants companionship. Unto the young, He is the jubilant comrade. Unto the old, He is the re-assuring associate. Unto the male, He is the strong, sturdy, self-dedicating heroism. Unto the female, He is the sweet, tender, self-sacrificing love. Unto the child, He is the pure, innocent, trusting attachment. Unto the sage, He is the piercing, quickening truth. Unto the saint, He is the perfect immaculate holiness. Unto us, He is all in all; in the study our Teacher; in the dining room our Mother feeding us; on the bed our Mother lulling us to sleep; at work our Inspirer and Guide; in company our harmonising and enlivening Sanctifier; in solitude our serene meditative Spirit hovering over us and throbbing in us; standing on earth, the firmness below;

looking up, the radiance and the glow ; looking round, the charm and colour ; brooding within, the gospel and the beatitude ; listening within, the oracle and the inspiration ; silently reposing, the refreshing slumber and the rejuvenating rest.

Again it is man's love in response to that of God that enables the pious martyr to laugh to scorn the tyrant's ire, to smile on the scaffold, to court honourable death and to seal the doctrine of truth with his life-blood. And it is this love for his fellow creatures that emboldens the true hero to seek the huts of misery and the scenes of pestilence as the field of his glory and victory.

Every one knows the world-wide tale about Abou Ben Adhem—how he showed himself to be a real lover of man and how an angel from God assured him that he headed the list of all the lovers of God. In fact, we may rest assured that wherever there is real genuine love for God, there cannot but be deep love for all His creatures ; and that he who disinterestedly and with a pure motive loves every object around him consciously or otherwise, loves the Creator, Father and Sustainer of that object. It is this deep love for God and all his creatures that makes a man complete. Be he ever so great and large and broad, let his intellect be incommensurable, his other faculties brilliant, unless and until he has deep, firm, and enduring love for God and for His creatures, that man is after all a glaring type of badness. It is this deep love for God and for His creatures that brings into play all the latent capabilities and attributes of a great man. The more we revere and love the Creator, the more do we love the created ; for in the words of the poet :—

“ He prayeth best who loveth best,
All things both great and small ;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all.”

What God demands as due from us is that disinterested hospitality like that of a tree which does not withhold its fruit even from the wood-cutter—that sincere charity of a true philanthropist who gives alms in secret and blushes to see them famed, who spreads peace and plenty wherever he goes but accounts it no obligation on others, who writes the gospel of love with his hands and feet in helping the widow and the orphan and in visiting the poor and the sick with endless sympathy.

Furthermore, love is not gratitude for liberal benefits, not admiration for transcendent wisdom, not reverence for unspotted holiness, not confidence in unfailing providence, not obedience to sovereign will, not assent to infallible truth; but love, true love, pure love, simple love consists in adoring God as the Beautiful One, so entrancing alike to the eye and to the heart. Love, love, love—that is something purer, holier, more engaging and more absorbing than all the other sentiments of obedience, trust, gratitude and reverence. It is love which declares: *"Thyself and myself are sufficient unto each other. Let the world be dissolved into the elements. Let the rainbow fade into darkness. Let music be hushed into silence or even confounded into jarring discord. Let the smiling landscape be blasted into a volcanic eruption. Thou and I are sufficient unto each other, heart applied to Heart, soul clinging to Soul, embracing each the other."*

This love is all inclusive. It is purer than flawless holiness, surer than unerring wisdom, stronger than irresistible omnipotence, richer than inexhaustible goodness. Love as the fundamental instinct or impulse—the ceaseless vital breath of the soul—is imperishable, immortal. It is a treasure of ecstatic experience—of an uncalculating, unhesitating, unwavering, self-surrendering devotion, which is prior and superior to all holiness and all righteousness.

It may be asked, if, as the Rishis proclaim, God is all Love and nothing but Love, why does He permit the pre-

valence of so much *pain* and *sorrow* in the world, while as the Omnipotent He could have shut them out altogether from it and transformed the aching earth into a pleasurable paradise? A little reflection will show that pain and sorrow so unwelcome to us are divinely ordained for our own good in the furtherance of His holy purposes.

Pain which is felt by the body in any of its parts and sorrow which is felt by the soul in its emotions and affections are not caused through the indifference or malevolence of God but are the direct manifestations of His love to us. The Heavenly Mother rocks us in the cradle of pain with Her own Hand for our own ultimate good. How, it may be asked. Pain is universal. "Painful sensations," says Professor Le Conte "are only watchful vedettes upon the outposts of our organism to warn us of approaching danger. Without these, the citadel of our life would be quickly surprised and taken." In other words, pain is a symptom of disease or injury which may be the prelude of death. Bodily instinct tells us that if we are to live, we must drive out the would-be murderer. All the activities of the body combine like an army to expel the foe. And the intrusive, insidious presence of that foe can only be made known to us by pain. Pain is the sentinel which rouses the whole garrison.

We see the necessity of pain in the new born child long before consciousness has begun, nay, at the moment of its birth. Every natural healthy infant cries, *i.e.*, expresses its sense of pain either from cold or from hunger. If it be not covered with warm clothing and if it be not promptly fed, it must die. Its pains make it cry out, and unless these pains were felt, it would be utterly defenceless. Yet these pains would be entirely useless to the infant, were it not for the divine plan which has made the mother to feel pain also. To hear the child cry causes her the great mental pain of sympathy, and so she instantly responds

to that cry and gives it food and warmth. Moreover, if it did not cause her bodily pain to withhold the natural food from her babe, she might not be so ready to respond to the cry. And all through the subsequent stages of infancy, pain is a necessary element in the life of the child. It is a constant warning to the mother or nurse that something is wanted, that something is wrong and needs alteration or remedy. And as the child grows, it learns day by day through pain what is safe and what is not safe for it to have or to do. It thus learns to walk by the pain which accompanies its earliest experiments, and learns to speak by the distress and inconvenience of not being able properly to make its wants known. It learns that fire burns and water in ponds and rivers is to be cautiously approached ; it learns that eating too fast, or too much will produce indigestion, *i.e.*, pain. It learns by pain to be sympathetic and unselfish. These pains are therefore necessary at the very earliest stage of our life on earth, not only actual physical pains, but the pains of sympathy on the part of those to whom our preservation has been entrusted. Follow the merely animal life of man through all its stages and you will perceive that pain in some form or other is essential to life, is always a warning of some disease or danger which leads to death. God is therefore to be thanked and not blamed for sending pain.

Pain is not only essential to life but essential to pleasure. Persons who have diseased heart or lungs, producing paroxysms of acute pain, in the intervals of immunity, experience pleasure in the mere act of breathing such as those who are healthy have no idea of.

Again, the avenues of pain and pleasure are one and the same. The nervous system, the five senses and the centres of feeling to which they lead, are used alike by pleasing and displeasing objects. If we had no faculty for feeling pain, we could have none for feeling any pleasure ; both must pass to the seat of consciousness along the same road, by the

self-same nerves of sensation. The possibility of pleasure therefore depends on the possibility of pain.

Yet again, pain has been our great teacher, teacher of agriculture, commerce, literature, art and science. Had it not been for pain and the restless desire to prevent or remove it, there would have been no cultivation of the mind, no discoveries of stored-up treasures in the bowels of the earth, no reading of the wonderful books of Nature which are spread out before us. Pain is not only the parent of the fortitude of endurance but of the men's heroic rushing into danger—rushing deliberately with their eyes wide open—into the infection of fatal disease, into the perils of drowning or into the tortures of fire, to rescue the poor bodies of their fellow-men in the hour of mortal struggle; yes, not merely for the beloved wife and children or friends but for strangers whose very names were unknown. Above all, pain is the parent of sympathy. The saying that one touch of sorrow makes the whole world akin is all but literally true and this, our sweetest virtue, would have been impossible and unknown in a world from which pain and sorrow were excluded. One remarkable fact in the experience of almost all is that those angels of mercy who dedicate their life to nurse the sick and alleviate the suffering of their fellow beings seem never to have their faith in God shaken by the misery they witness, but are always full of the assurance of the divine love and seem to see God right through the travail and the anguish.

Now, in looking abroad on the pains of the world, we find by far the greatest part arises through the misuse of our freedom of will, through our action in direct disobedience to moral law. The greatest and worst of human sufferings have been caused by selfishness, by excessive or unlawful indulgence of appetite, by ambition, by covetousness and by direct cruelty. There is no ferocious beast of prey comparable to the human beast, when he is swayed by selfishness,

and bad passions. Man is the most cruel of all creatures on the face of the earth. In the words of Plutarch, "no beast is more savage than man possessed with power answerable to his rage." And the plain truth must be stated that the most horrible tortures that have ever been devised were intended by the priest-craft to maintain their absolute power over ignorant people, as witness the record of "Holy Inquisition" in the Christendom in Europe under which thousands and thousands of innocent human beings, for the matter of that, humble, devout Christians, were burnt alive at the stake for so-called heretical views, and the unspeakable tortures of *Suttee* in India (burning alive of Hindu widows on the funeral pyre of their husbands). And to all these physical horrors must be added the even deeper cruelty of torturing the minds of men, women and children by threats of eternal damnation in the flames of hell-fire under the very eye of "Our Father in Heaven" and "the Inexorable Yama" (the God of Death). When the mandate went forth that man was to be a moral being and endowed with a limited freedom of will, that he was to learn for himself the difference between things good and things evil, step by step, that he was to learn by experiment, not by success only but also by failure, he was then and there foredoomed to pass through an ordeal of suffering such as only a God can foresee.

We also know that there are vast areas of human pain that are not caused by human sin. They are caused by the standing, enduring, universal laws of nature—the regular action of the primitive cosmical forces, as, for instance, in earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, cyclones. These cosmical laws sweep through all time and space. Through them and through them alone has any universe at all been evolved. For us to stand up and find fault with gravitation or the law of the refraction of light, does indeed seem a monstrous specimen of conceit. While to ask that these laws and the like should be suspended, wherever a human being is in the

way, is to ask that God would substitute disorder and confusion for that perfect and universal order which is the very foundation of all society and civilisation and progress and human happiness.

When we pass from the human to the animal, from the moral to the unmoral world, pain seems a necessity in the process of evolution. Wallace, the enthusiastic disciple of Darwin and himself a celebrated British naturalist, who died so recently as 1913, clearly points out the errors involved in estimates like Tennyson's and Huxley's of the volume and intensity of the woes of the animals. Says he, "The popular idea of the struggle for existence entailing misery and pain on the animal world is the very reverse of the truth. What it really brings about is the maximum of life and the enjoyment of life with the minimum of suffering and pain. Given the necessity of death and reproduction—and without these there could have been no progressive development of the animal world, it is difficult even to imagine a system by which a greater balance of happiness could have been secured." When what is called the struggle for existence has been proved to lead not to the deterioration but to the improvement of life—to the greatest abundance of the highest kinds of life possible in the circumstances, it will have been vindicated and shown to have been a means to secure such ends as a wise and benevolent Being would entertain.

Again, goodness is evolved from pain more richly than from any other source. Says Dr. Martineau "The truest piety is to be learned only in the school of suffering; and strange to say, its usual characteristic is a certain brightness and restfulness of spirit, free from the plaintive tones of painless religion; its faith is not shaken, but confirmed by the shock. It is the observer that whimpers, while the victim sings "though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."

Further, perpetual prosperity seems never to fail to breed selfishness in the heart, and the battle with difficulty seem

the indispensable condition for the making of human greatness. Take away all suffering and wrong and surely heroism would be blotted out of the history of humanity. It is not a sickly and monastic saintliness that springs from the soil of pain but all that we include under the term 'manliness.' Besides, pain is not an end in itself, but a means to an end and its end is a benevolent one. The character of pain itself is such as to indicate that its Author must be a Benevolent Being—One who does not afflict for His own pleasure, but for His creatures' profit. At the same time, it should be noted that, as Emerson says, "Providence has a wild rough incalculable road to its end and it is of no use to try to white-wash Its huge mixed instrumentalities, or to dress up that terrific Benefactor in a clean shirt and white neck-cloth of a student of divinity."

Sorrow like pain is equally unwelcome. We dread its approach. The most common type of sorrow is that of the frustration of our self-will, of our efforts, the disappointment of our hopes and desires. By the very sorrow which the frustration of our excessive self-will creates, God intends us to learn how foolish we are to be our own tormentors and to fix our hearts and hopes on the attainment of forbidden or impossible things.

As regards the sorrows of contrition, repentance and remorse, if we are responsible for our actions at all, we must accuse ourselves of having been the cause of our own sorrow. We cannot blame God for it.

Sorrow like pain is a sentinel warning us that something is wrong and needs putting right. "God doth not afflict us willingly, nor from His heart doth He grieve the children of men." He sends us sorrow that we may avoid those wrong actions which cause sorrow. It is sorrow which teaches us when riches increase, not to set our hearts upon them, when our earthly desires, however lawful and pure

are gratified, not to mistake the gratification of the body for the gratification of the soul. It is only sorrow that can teach us that when our highest worldly ambitions are fulfilled, the soul is still unsatisfied, and for ever will be unsatisfied until it finds and rejoices in God.

In passing, I may add that in the economy of God's moral Government no human being passes from the cradle to the grave without some form and degree of pain and sorrow. We derive some consolation from comparing our own sorrows and troubles with the worse sorrows and troubles of others. Herodotus, the Greek historian, tells us a pretty legend of a great market once held, to which all the world came in order to exchange each his own sorrow for the lighter sorrow of some one else. But after a long day spent in scrutinising each other's sorrows, every man went home, as he came, with his own sorrow—which was after all the lightest and most easy to bear.

Then there is the great consolation, which comes more slowly, yet none the less surely, of seeing and knowing the fruits of our sorrow in the improvement of our own character, in the strengthening of our fortitude, patience, contentment, in the widening and deepening of our sympathies and above all, in bringing us nearer to God and increasing our loving trust in His good purposes.

Thus we see that pains of whatever kind, sorrows of failure and loss, sorrows of fear and anxiety, sorrows of sympathy and love, all tend designedly to drive us into the Arms of God, whose Love is waiting for us, yearning for us to come to Himself and to find perfect peace in Him and Him alone.

Notwithstanding what has been stated above, I must admit candidly that there are many forms of suffering and many special instances of it which, in our present state of ignorance, cannot, with equal certainty, be shown to be

conducive to human welfare. At the same time, until the final issue of them is disclosed, it cannot be proved that such pains are not equally beneficial with those pains which have been manifestly proved to be so. It is important to remember that our failure to see a good purpose in any part of God's work does not and cannot vitiate the good purpose of those sufferings which we have clearly seen to be beneficial. On the contrary, it is more reasonable to infer that all the dealings of God are equally good, when some of them have been proved to be so, than to infer that He is bad from those evils which we cannot explain, or for which we are at present unable to see a good purpose. We must also remember that man is an unfinished work of God, that each individual is in process of evolution and that the final result we do not see and cannot see, till it be accomplished.

The Supreme Being, say the Rishis, is the ever-beloved God of all mankind, merciful, irrepressibly eager for our weal, even for us sinners—the Supreme Majestic Ruler of us all, the Monarch of all monarchs, the unrivalled Emperor to whose sceptre all mortal heads, however exalted, bow and submit in reverence. And yet, He cares for us; He would not give us up; even the vile worm of a sinner is precious unto Him. He, in His glorious triumphs of love, descends into depths, into lowly, receding, engulfing depths, which baffle human comprehension. He is not merely the towering God, but also the deep-diving God, plunging into the sunken retreats of the fallen. Exalted, He descends into the depths of our degradation. Pure, He busies Himself in cleansing, indeed, in transforming our impurity. Affluent, He chooses to become a mendicant knocking for our love at the lowly door of our sinful hearts. King of kings, He employs Himself even as the servant of servants.

Although God is the Highest Being, yet makes Himself through creation, conservation and government the Chief Servant in His own house-hold, the house-hold of Humanity,

of whom the Upanishad has beautifully sung "*Anoranceeyan mahathomaheeyan.*" When the whole house-hold is asleep in the night, He is awake, "*making one desirable object after another*" to quote the Rishis' words, and is engaged first and foremost in keeping up the heart-pumps and sustaining the life wrapped up in sleep. Side by side with working the the heart-pump and the lung bladder, He is distilling the dews, wafting the breezes, bringing down the showers, painting the lily and producing food for the entire house-hold for each morrow. He serves us as an attentive, devoted and tender-hearted nurse alike in the calm of health and in the spasm of suffering, alike in the even functioning of limb and organ, and the arrested flow of the peaceful course of life, alike in the delights and the ordeals of physical existence. And as age creeps in and feebleness gains, His motherly service becomes all the more unmistakably manifest. To the bedimmed eye, He provides the glass; to the shaking arm, He supplies the staff; to the faltering limb, He imparts caution; to the weakened heart, He furnishes the cordial.

In a word, the whole course of our life is under His sway and control even as the Servant God. Through service, He serves mankind. It is not through governing, through controlling, through teaching, but through serving that He carries on the cosmic processes. As the Serving God, He becomes the Supreme Democrat. Everyone who believes in democracy is imperatively called upon, likewise, to realise and justify himself through loving service. He alone can be a true democrat who finds his joy in service. Just as God, the Servant, is God, the Saviour, so under a system of true democracy, service and salvation become convertible terms. We are saved through service. Thus we find work and service are interlinked. In other words, where genuine work has to be done, true worship has to be cultivated—not that worship which merely begins with and ends in certain rituals and liturgies, but that true worship in which

the human spirit comes into rapturous communion, with the Power, Wisdom and Beneficence that holds the helm of the universe in its Hand. The helm of the world, says Emerson, is not in our hands but in the hands of that Supreme Administer who knows the way and can and will land us safe ashore. Worship, the rapturous re-union of the human and the Divine, the ecstatic meeting of the ascending soul of man with the descending Spirit of God, is the starting point of all abiding work—work which everyman has to contribute if he claims a place in true democracy.

Therefore, our aim in these great times through which we are passing must be to see how we can so interpret faith and experience that each one of us shall be able to make his contribution to the harmony, not of creeds, but of worship and of its fruit, namely work. Then we shall be able to worship if not in the same temple, at least in the same spirit, receiving more and more of His holiness and making it the inspiration and sanction for all work. Worship without work is barren. Work without worship is wasting. Worship with work is perennially benevolent. Work with worship is capable of perpetual self-invigoration. We should recognise the twin relation between God and man—man contemplating God in *dhyana* and worshipping Him in *Bhakti*. And then, God, becomes visioned in worship and reproduced through works. And thus we shall be able to hail those of seemingly other faiths than our own as only another section of the confraternity of souls. In *Nathan the wise*, the Jew and the Christian grow into friendship. Says the Christian, "Nathan, you are a Christian: none better." Replies the Jew, "Nay, the Jew in you has told you I am a Christian." Thus the Christian has to become one with the Jew to understand the Jew, and the Jew with the Christian to understand the Christian. And this is true all-round. There is a story in Rumi. Four travellers—an Arab, a Persian, a

Turk and a Greek—are travelling together in a party. All felt the need of a refreshing repast. The first says, 'I want *anab*'; the second, 'I want *angur*'; the third '*anjeer*'; and the fourth, '*staphule*'. As they are thus engaged in wrangling over the name, they see a load being carried on the back of a donkey. Each one, glancing at the contents, wistfully exclaims, '*That* is the fruit I want!' They did not differ in the concept but only over the name. Thus to understand and realise the spirit behind the forms is to make it possible for different faiths to come together. Be it discerned that the varying concepts, after all, are only distinguishing characteristics and not differentiating factors. We, Hindus, as we utter the name 'God', will understand Him as the sublime ideal of Brahman; and the Christian, for his part, as the moving inspiration for all that is benevolent. A recent translator of the Koran said, 'Allah' cannot be translated into English ;" and, therefore, he retained 'Allah' throughout without substituting the familiar term 'God' for it. These are aspects, not attributes, which impress themselves re-eminently in diverse ways on different spirits. Our study must be, not to make stumbling-blocks of them, but to realise the different aspects in the harmony of the one only Being and to grow into the sanctifying conception of the God of sublime thought, of inexhaustible love, of enrapturing beauty and of awe-inspiring holiness. None of the concepts can be dispensed with. But all together will bring in salvation, when the soul becomes the mirror of the Divine Being and, as a Sufi has said, "*Thou* and *I* are seated in the garden, holding converse which Thou and I alone can understand." After all, the one thing needful is not the critical knowledge, but reproduction in life, through mutual understanding and reciprocal appreciation, the soul of devotion, not the garb of faith, as stated by Brahma Rishi Venkata Ratnam.

Before concluding the chapter, let us through a but illuminating story which I produce below from Bra Rishi Venkataratnam's '*Message and Ministrations*', to receive and retain in our hearts this ever-lasting that we are for ever in direct touch with, in the very em of a good God—good because in His innermost subs He is Love itself as stated by the Upanishadic Rishi

"Some centuries ago, there lived a profound mystic, Tauler name. As he dwelt in the city of Strasburg by the Rhine, he was haunted by the one perplexing problem of the solemn Mystery of what may be its real intent; 'why has it been brought into existence where can we find that peace which, if there existed a good God, would be the end and goal of all?' With this age-long problem troubling his mind, he was having a stroll along side of the river. He felt as if he were wandering in a starless night, feeling the jar of unseen waves, hearing the thunder of an unknown sea breathing along an unimagined shore. That is to say, his soul was passing through that travail spirit when it can neither believe nor disbelieve, when conviction cannot be ratified by conviction and yet disbelief cannot be against intuition. In this distracted state, as he walked he prayed the same old prayer of a decade of torment—the groaning gnawing anguish in the heart: 'Lord, have pity on me while I pretend to lead others, I am myself blind; vouchsafe guidance unto my groping steps! How harrowing is the misery of that which others credit with wisdom and turn to with trust; while, in my proper self, it has neither the light that guides nor the strength that sustains!' As this sorrowing supplication is once again uttered, Tauler hears, drawing near, the steps of a poor, feeble, old man supporting himself on a staff. As he comes within hearing, Tauler greets him, "Peace unto thee, father! God give thee a good day!" The old man lifts up his calm blue eyes and answers "I thank thee, my son, for thy good will. But all my days are good and all are ill." Tauler wishes him a good day as though it is a special gift of Providence; but the stranger avers that all his days are good. This startles Tauler. To the humble-souled believer, every day is good, to him there is no evil day (*durdinam*), except that on which the soul fails to remember the Lord—to delight in His contemplation (*smaranam*). Thus astonished, Tauler further wishes to try the strength of the old man and therefore says, "God give thee happy life!" The old man smiles and observes "I never am unhappy." This is too mu

the doubting soul of Tauler. He places his hand upon the old man's coarse gray sleeve and says, 'Tell me, O father, what thy strange words mean. Surely man's days are evil and his life sad as the grave it leads to.' "No, decisively no" is the stranger's answer to Tauler, "Our times are in God's hands; His daily gifts are in complete accord with our real needs. Be it shadow or sunshine, be it want or wealth, what he grants is the best for us and merits our thanks. The sole evil in our life is to miss sharing in God's holy life. And I derive and enjoy unbroken happiness from submission to His will and from trust in His wisdom, goodness and power. In Him inhere the goodness that purposes, the wisdom that plans and the power that accomplishes the noble ends of our Life." The answer fills the great preacher only with dumb-stricken wonder. After a pause, the old haunting doubt surges up again as if with the terrific form of a ghost; and Tauler hurls the question at the old man. "How would it fare with you should God consign you hence to hell?" 'Be it so' is the serene avowal. The stranger does not know what Hell is; but he knows he can never lose the presence of God. His soul is endowed with two arms—Humility and Love—Humility with which he embraces Humanity, Love with which he holds to God. So he is always with God, inseparably united to God; and to Him, Hell and Heaven make no difference. Better Hell with God, if that could be, than Heaven without God! Yes; if we attain to that state of God-realisation when we can declare, "Where I go, He goes, wherever I am, He is,"—why, that is *jeevanmukti*, the life beatific. All veils are rent, all knots are broken, all barriers are levelled; and in the garden of love are seated, love-making 'Thou and I' as Sadi has it. This brings tears, as it could not but, into Tauler's eyes; and as the marvellous old man glides out of view, Tauler bows his head and exclaims that his prayer has been answered and God has sent the long-sought man of heaven-illuminated soul, whose simple trust begets more wisdom than all the bookful lore of the school-men could. With a new light in his eye and a new joy in his heart, Tauler enters back the city gates. And he sees far off across the broad street a mighty shadow over the broad midday light. As he traces it back, he comes to the basement of a church, and running his eye along the whole length of the edifice, his view rises to the point where on its tower is placed the sun-filled crown of midday radiance; and in that light he sees that it is this church, radiant at the top, that is casting its deep shadow across the street. As he reflects on this sight, his soul receives the illuminating truth—the one truth that, reverently pondered, not only dissolves all doubt

but transfigures the groping seeker into the sure seer of divine wisdom namely, yonder tower, with midday radiance at the top but dusky shade at the base, is a graphic symbol of man's life which rooted in the earth, but reared into the heaven, must and cannot but be composite of mundane clay and celestial ray. With whatever analogy invested, in the struggle to convey the in-conveyable, the truth at the core is that the human soul is a way-farer through the world and has to ascend from darkness into light; *tamasomajyothirgamaya* as the Upanishads say. "The dust that I was. He has moulded into man," says an Urdu poet. And man's high destiny is to emerge into an angel—a being composed of undimmed light. During this emergence the soul's eye has to be trained to fix a steady glance, through the enveloping gloom, at the central gleam of guidance in every path. Hence across the path of man lies the shadow which the great Sun of Wisdom casts thereon. It is dark below, even because there is light above. What is Providence but the peep of purpose through the cloud of chance? Darkness is a foil of Light. Trust is the soul's vigour for the coming matins.

"That is the story rendered in beautiful verse by Whittier, one of the most inspired poets of America. As we intently ponder it and prayerfully receive its message, do we not feel that we are, one and all, exalted as His beloved children into the very bosom of the Holy One? Of the many priceless truths in this poem, there is one which is a most inspiring exemplification, in plain homely form, of the reality of the immediacy, the blessedness of our relation to God. As the body is endowed with two arms, so is the spirit too, gifted with two arms. With one arm, Humility, we take hold upon His dear Humanity; with the other arm, Love, we clasp His Divinity. Then what is the human spirit but the casket, the treasure-trove of the whole wealth of truth contained in Humanity and Divinity."

"After all what constitutes the process of life may be summed up in one word: the manward descent of God and the Godward ascent of man—humanity sanctified even through the indwelling spirit of God. *Isavasyamidamsarvam*. This descent (*Avatarana*) of Divinity into Humanity with the return ascent,—this circle of spiritual current, transmuting and transfiguring Humanity into the mirror, the image of Divinity—this sublime truth it is that is implied in Tennyson's profound declaration. "On God and God-like men, we build our hopes." Again let us think of Humility and Love as the two arms with which man is to work out his eternal destiny—that Humility which is forward to do good but shrinks to self."

it famed, which gives in the name of God, forgets what it has given, and renders thanks and rejoices that it has been elected to serve; and that Love which loves and seeks no return, which is loyal even unto death, which (moth-like) delights to be consumed by and assumed into the Beloved—Life achieved in merger into Love! Thus and thus alone does the eye of devout love discern the divinity in man through all veils, through all disguise, form or place or name."

Again God's Mercy would not lose sight of one grain of worth in us while condoning a thousand blemishes. To us, mortals, the life of a brother-man is a narrow zone, a small span and no more; but unto Him, each life is figured forth along its whole length and breadth and depth. Before His all-seeing eye, the Nile is mapped out at once through all the four thousand miles of its course, even as the slender silver line at the start. Unto Him, the whole length being taken in at a single gaze, the mighty flow of waters is one panorama of beauty and grandeur which man, the creature of time and space, can never adequately vision. God watches and rejoices over the rolling waters as they swell into a vast river flooding a whole country and bringing bounty to millions. So too before His eye, our whole life is mapped out and in the sinner of earth, despite all his weaknesses and wretchednesses, He sees already the future saint of heaven, and in the Divine, process of the soul's unfolding, He ignores not the fact that the sinner is first of this earth and subject to the frailties of the body.

Again, we are all familiar with that little anecdote in the accounts of Islamic mysticism, which reveals the boundless mercy of God. A devotee felt that, after all, he had every right to believe that he was loved of the Deity. Said God, "*Hussain, shall I disclose thy secret sins that men may stone thee to death for what thou art.*" And out came the answer, "*Yes, do and I will disclose too Thine own surprising secrets—Thy unexpected compassion, Thy unmerited mercy, Thy undeserved forgiveness, Thy unsolicited grace—so that mankind*

might close the doors of Thy mosques and say no prayers." "Nay, nay," said the Lord, "*Thou keep secrets and I will keep thine.*" So God keeps the secrets of the abysmal caverns of our iniquities and we revel in the secrets of the fathomless depths of His mercy.

To crown all, God's mercy makes certain that all must and will be saved ultimately. "From His Love have all these beings been born; by His love created are sustained and into His love they proceed and . . . So declares the Taittiriya Upanishad. It is only a question of time, of varying starting points, of varying speed of progress, some coming to the goal sooner, some later by the shortest route (called *Devayana* by the Rishis) by the longest (called *Pitrayana*), but, all sure to reach the crown of Love and Righteousness which He, our Father, is holding to place on the brows of His victor children, who will then fully understand and realise they now rightly call their glorious liberty—that liberty which enjoins on us to do right only for its own sake, to follow truth only for its own sake and love goodness for its own sake, and not for any ulterior reward or of punishment. To give up even a single soul as hopelessly and irreclaimably sinful, would repudiate God's own act in creating it and run counter to the whole policy of His Government. If we had a thousand voices and a thousand tongues, could we praise God's pity for the fallen, could we describe His mercy for the sinners, could we express His goodness for humanity, could we acknowledge our debt to Him? It follows therefore that Hell as a place purgatorial designed for eternal *punishment*, does not and cannot exist. God is love, Mercy and Goodness. The human soul is an offspring of the Spirit of God; and a Deity can condemn His own issue to everlasting suffering in eternal hell, a God who cursed the human race for their

of its first parents, who has sent millions and millions to hell already, and who would have let none escape unless his wrath had been appeased by the blood of His own son, is, as Herbert Spencer feelingly remarks, immeasurably crueller than that Fijian God who is alleged to feast on the souls of the departed.

Needless to state that the Supreme Being loves us all alike with an everlasting love, that He punishes us justly for every sin not in anger or vengeance, but only to cleanse, to heal and to bless and that in His everlasting arms we lie now and to all eternity. Yea, by Him we are exalted, transformed, transfigured, beyond the might of the subtlest pollution. We are the children of the Infinite One, the heirs of the wisdom of the ages, proclaimed crown-princes of the vastest dominions. We, uplifted to the summit of humanity, rejoice in the sun-shine of the Divine Mother.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE RISHIS' CONCEPTION OF GOD'S LOVE TO EVERY MAN INDIVIDUALLY; INSTINCTIVE CRAVING OF THE SOUL FOR COMMUNION WITH GOD.

According to the Rishis, God's love is not merely universal and general but individual and particular. He rules us not merely by general laws but His grace comes to us through special channels in order to remove the peculiar wants of each individual. Thus we find that while we live in the atmosphere of general providence where every law promotes our happiness and every portion of the machinery of the divine government contributes to our enjoyment, at the same time we feel and cannot but feel that very near our hearts is He, our loving Father, whose arms are out-stretched to relieve the wants of every individual. Seemingly standing aloof, He is really planning, designing, shaping, ushering,

guiding, completing, blessing the whole process of life—individual life, family life, communal life, national life, universal life, all-inclusive, all-comprehensive life. All His dispensations viewed from one stand-point are general; while from another standpoint, they are special. His general and special dispensations are not opposed to each other. Every thing He does, while it promotes the general happiness of mankind, also subserves the interests of every individual being. He who finds it worth while to be active in the filament of a nettle or the throbbing of a molecule cannot be less active and less mindful of every individual human being. His perpetual presence and activity in conscience is the pledge of His concern in the little choices every individual has to make hour by hour. With a wakefulness that knows no fatigue, with a personal interest that suffers no slackness and with a direct touch that experiences no uneasiness, God is placing His own spirit in intimate contact even with the humblest and obscurest of His creatures. The active presence of the Eternal Witness and Mentor in every heart is evidenced not only in the serenity of saintliness and the trust of martyrdom but also and equally well in the sigh of sorrow for righteousness, in the search of ignorance for truth, in the longing of doubt for faith and in the yearning of languor for life.

Emerson has observed that to a feeling mother, every moment in the life of her child is a miracle of God disclosed to her own anxious yet trustful heart. If only we imbibed and cultivated something of the mother, that is, of that tenderness which is momentarily solicitous for the welfare of the dear offspring, we should realise, too, how every instant in our individual life is an impressive miracle of the grace of God. If only we viewed it in the right spirit and with correct judgment, it would be recognised as a literal fact that every beat of the heart is truly and really one fresh expression of the direct interest of God in one's life. There is not the

slightest doubt about it, namely, that God is thus manifesting and realising Himself in the life of each one of us with every beat of the heart and every throb of the pulse.

It is the distinguishing virtue of the mother that while she seems to be looking at all the children, she is really prying into every child and that while she appears to be patting every child, she in truth, has her heart in direct touch with the heart of every child. In other words, what apparently is the sweep of common interest is actually the intense pervasion of individual affection. Thus does God disclose and unfold Himself increasingly unto each individual soul.

I shall here relate a story from a book called "Everlasting Hope" as sketched out by Brahma Rishi Venkata-atnam.

There was a pitman, a worker in the mines by name George, a married man with children. He was an average type of worker in the mines. He worked like a horse, toiled day and night, to make both ends meet. Having worked hard, he was eager for a portion of joy. He feels he had a right to pleasure. He who works hard can very well seek enjoyment. Thus he would take pleasure; now a cup of drink, now a game of cards, again sight-seeing and merry-making. He would go home and what he could save, after the day's little expenses upon personal enjoyment, he would give to his wife. He would not utter a harsh word to his wife or children. Thus he was living a fine life; a satisfactory life; if not a good life; not a bad life; and the wife had no reason to complain, though she had no reason to be satisfied, thus months and years pass till at length George one day comes home and tells his wife "Look here, Jennie, this day I have found something that I never imagined before—a great treasure. It is something so dear to the heart, something that I hold so valuable, that I cannot but tell you of the joy of it." "What may it be" asked the wife. Have you seen a glorious vision? Have you heard the angels sing? Have the doors of heaven opened and revealed a celestial light to you? Have the treasures of the earth been disclosed and laid bare to you? Ah, it is not that" says he, "though it includes all that and much more. I have heard a word. I have received a whisper, I have felt throb." "What is it then?" asked the wife. "I have come to see, now, feel, realise that God, even the great and glorious God, the

Eternal God, loves me, even me—Even He loves me, a collier working in the mines with no other language than that of a vulgar tongue, with no other pleasure than a game of cards or a drink of wine, providing no further comforts for wife and children than food and raiment, plodding along a life-path, dull, uninteresting ; even for me God cares. God loves me from the majesty of His heavenly throne. God comes down to dwell with me. From the infinity of His bounty, He provides for me and takes care of me and loves me—loves, not mine, not what I have ; but me, such as I am. That great treasure, that great blessing, that invaluable wealth, I have found. I rejoice, I am exceedingly glad. I cannot contain my delight and I must speak out my joy to you. God loves me.”

This anecdote contains the sum-total, the essence and fulfilment of all philosophy and religion ; the knowledge and certainty which says that God loves every single individual whatever his rank or station. He loves each one of us so much that, even if only a single one were the sole occupant, the only resident, of this universe, he could not then love him more than He now loves us. Such is the wonderful love of God. He loves us, each one of us, with the fulness of His love. No truly loving mother can give to any one of her children a fraction of the love that God gives to each one of His children. In how many myriad ways this love expresses itself. The light without, the eye within, the sound without, the ear within, the air without, the lungs within, the mysterious linking of the outward phenomena with the inner organs, the feeling soul, all harmonised and set to one purpose and attuned to one joy ? If this is not love, what else can be love ? The whole universe God gives unto each one of us. It betokens an inexhaustible mine of love. Not merely what we individually consume—that is a mere pittance, a negligible fraction—but what we can all enjoy by barely witnessing it, by being the *sakshi*—that is vast. The Rishis of Mundaka and Svetasvatara Upanishads say that on the tree of life there are two birds ; one eats and enjoys, the other sees and enjoys. There is blessedness in seeing and enjoying. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa

was in the evening of his life afflicted with such a terrible malady in the throat that he could not swallow any solid food. Unable to witness his miserable plight, the disciples implored him to get over this torturing ailment by exercising his psychic powers. To this the Master replied: "It is the wish of God that I should suffer and that is for my own good. I shall not thwart His will. I rejoice to see and enjoy when you are all eating. Am I not also eating through the mouths of you all?" We see the lamb and the kid caper and jump, the birds chirp and fly, the whole universe teeming with activity and enjoyment. We stand there as the witnesses of God's mercy and are led to realise that God cares for each one of us. Not merely what He has, according to our narrow, shallow notions, directly given to each one of us, for individual consumption; but what He has yielded for our enjoyment in and through others' delight—that is very vast. If we plugged our ears, if we closed our eyes, if we stuffed our nose, if we held our tongue, if the feeling of touch did not act, if the earth failed beneath our feet, then to some extent we could see how much God cares for each one of us and loves us.

As our personal Father, He knows each one of us by name, He carries each one of us in His heart. This is our Father's world. Wherever we are, we are beneath His eye; His protecting arms are ever around us. He concerns Himself in our problems and perplexities; He purveys all our needs and wants. He pioneers us in the path of progress. He is our Father. Salutation unto Him! With that acknowledgment and that homage, we come unto our all—affection, protection, redemption, benediction, perfection.

How intimate, now enduring, how affectionately, providentially, everlastingly interested He is in each one of us individually! Therein lies His vastness, His greatness, His glory, His majesty, that He thus gives himself unto

each one of us. Not the general care, not the universal law, not the all-comprehensive view and vision, but the particular providence, the individual attention, the personal interest, the direct concern, the intimate association—this makes Him our God, the God of each one of us. Thus He endears Himself to each one of us as our own Author, Protector, Preserver, Friend, Teacher, Saviour. He thus rears unto Himself a sweet home in the loving heart and a holy sanctuary in the adoring soul of each one of His children. There exists between Him and His devotee a deep and sweet relationship, increasingly deepened and sweetened all through life. The light of self-consciousness, intensified by deep meditation, discloses the constant and intimate relation of Him with the soul in incomparable love. In unnumbered special ways, He applies Himself, He devotes His own person to each single one of His children with all the solace and all the joy of love and grace. Unto the erring, how eager in reclaiming; unto the sinful, how gracious in forgiving; unto the fallen, how assiduous in uplifting; unto the weak, how merciful in strengthening; unto the needy, how beautiful in contenting; unto the opulent, how benevolent in serving; unto the heedless, how ceaseless in warning; unto the faithful, how constant in befriending—thus how He adapts Himself to each one of His children!

He is the very Life of our lives, the very Soul of our souls, the very Stamina, the very Substance, the very Vitality of our existence. He is the whole plan, the complete purpose, the entire progress of all our lives. He has designed, He has determined, He has prescribed the destiny of our lives. All our days He has counted out each in its detail, laid out each along its entire course, all with parental solicitude and promise of fulfilment.

The whole course of our individual being has been mapped out by Him. All efforts and endeavours, all paths to progress, all facilities for self-development and service—

all are of His own ordering. Not merely in the larger concerns of the world's destiny but in the minutest details of every hour of every day of each life is He present.

To recite a few within the experience of every one of us. It is He that wakes us all, calls the heart to utter His name and sing His praise at the break of day, takes us out to enjoy the cool morning breeze, bathes us in refreshing water, the direct manifestation of His Love, and gives us our daily food, the direct embodiment of His grace. It is He that animates and bestirs our hearts and guides and cheers us in our struggles and conflicts with the temptations of life and keeps us under a most loving and unwearied guardianship during the day.

He makes us eat. We could not see our food unless He showed it as the eye of our eyes, as the Rishis say. Not a particle of food could exist unless He made it possible and supported it. And unless He infused strength into our body moment by moment, our eating, drinking and all other acts would be impossible.

He himself exists in our body and controls the *pancha* or five *pranas*. It is of His own activity that food is digested, blood is circulated, respiratory and other functions of the body are performed. Here is a bald interpretation of what is, in truth, His daily and hourly ministering with a motherly hand unto the needs of our physical self and through the physical frame help also sustain the non-physical faculties and powers. This fact—the involuntary and unconscious action of our internal organs, the intestines, the liver, the heart, the lungs, etc., and the preservation of the body thereby—a fact the significance of which escapes us on account of its familiarity, is alone sufficient to fill us with gratitude, if we ponder over it.

Ever related to the body and the mind, He accompanies us wherever we go and saves us from the innumerable dangers which we encounter in our daily life.

It is He who gives us rest and peace when our labours are at an end at the close of the day and lulls us to refreshing sleep on His Holy Lap.

It is He who, when we study, makes us see as the eye of our eyes and imparts unto us the light of knowledge through our reason and understanding.

It is He who calls us to worship, makes us join our hands and close our eyes, compose our thoughts ; reveals Himself to us as the True, the Intelligent and the Joyous, the Good and the Beautiful, refreshes our heart with love and peace and braces the soul with the strength of holiness.

It is He who as our conscience gives commandments to the soul, saves it from sin and leads it to virtuous acts and exalts it with high ideals.

It is He who guides our steps to the wise and the devout and quickens our minds to understand words of truth, wisdom, love and righteousness. Bridging distances of time, and space, it is He who introduces us to the hoary Aryan Rishis with their heaven-illuminated souls and makes us listen to their deep teachings.

It is He who takes us to the lotus feet of Buddha wrapt in profound meditation under the Bodhi tree.

It is He who makes us hear the inspiring beatitudes of Jesus Christ seated on the mountains of Canan, the cordial of his speech to weary men and stricken women. It is He that leads us next to the garden of Gethsemane, there to witness one of the grandest moral struggles and thorough resignation to His Will of one of His exalted sons in the midst of intensest agony with an immediate and violent death staring at the face and the ultimate triumph of the spirit over the flesh and the resultant influx of peace and consolation into the blessed soul of Jesus in answer to his earnest prayer. He thence takes us on to the calvary and shows us "*The Son of Man*," in the plenitude of his glory

of divine humanity in that most touching and wonderful scene of self-sacrifice that has ever adorned the pages of history. Nothing can compare in moral loveliness and moral splendour with that sign of meek, enduring nature, with that sustainment of persecution through life and with that exercise of the utmost self-surrender and devotion in the very agonies of death which have rendered the cross the consecrated emblem of Christianity.

He, who was expected to be the Saviour and Redeemer of a fallen race, who was looked up to as the Deliverer of the Jewish nation from the yoke of Rome and was believed to incarnate in himself the glory of the eternal triumph—even he was awarded the bitter cross and the thorny crown with the jeering hail, "Behold the King of the Jews!" And as the very climax of the indignity, he was crucified between two thieves, amidst shame, ignominy and public execration. Betrayed by the trusted, disowned by the beloved, he was doomed to this humiliating death. But twenty centuries witness to his translation from the felon's grave to the glory of the King of Martyrs with princes and peoples alike bowing the reverent heads to him. Such are the mysterious dispensations of Providence. Such are His inscrutable methods which we with our limited knowledge cannot fathom into. As Carlyle says: "This world is still a miracle, wonderful, inscrutable, *magical* and more, to whosoever will *think* of it."

Again, it is He who taking us to old Nuddea makes us dance in the excitement of love with the love-maddened devotees of Chaitanya assembled there.

Every living creature is a field of His incessant activity. The world is only an aggregate of such fields. The whole of our life is a field of His special Providence. We lie steeped in the ocean of His special love. His Providence is not merely comprehensively universal, but distinctly individual; though total, yet individual; though universal, yet special

and personal. All that we perceive and all that we experience, all that we enjoy or endure, all are waves of the ocean of His special love. The sun, the moon and the stars, fire, air, earth, water and ether, our house, our family, our friends, society, good books, good men, knowledge, peace, and holiness—all are waves of that love designed for our individual happiness.

His fatherly love encompasses the entire course of our life assuming multifarious forms. We rebel, He chastises ; that is love. We are stiff, He subdues ; that is love. We are negligent, He compels ; that is love. We are dutiful, He cheers ; that is love. We yearn, He supplies ; that is love. We wish to know, He gives the inspiration ; that is love. We fall off, He runs after us ; that is love. We come back home, He with open arms welcomes us ; that is love. We look the unkind look, he chides us ; that is love. We sigh, He soothes ; that is love. We cry, He comforts ; that is love. We open our eyes, He reveals beauty ; that is love. The morning returns, He restores the whole world to us ; that is love. The night comes, He deposits back the world with ease for us ; that is love. We wake from bed, the day's work awaits us ; that is love. We lay aside our work, He rests our weary head upon the pillow of His lap ; that is love. From the first gleam of the dawn of the morning to the last shade of the dusk of the evening and throughout the whole night, we are floating, as it were, in the ocean of His special love which surrounds us on all sides, above as protection, below as foundation, around as watchfulness, within as wisdom and bliss.

When we see His inexpressible love surrounding us on all sides, our hearts swell up almost to the bursting point and our souls voice their rapture in the hymn :—

“The weight of Thy love, I can bear no more,
My heart cries out and bursts when I see Thy love,
I take refuge in Thy fearless feet ;

Maddened by love, I shall laugh and cry,
Shall float in the ocean of Divine Bliss,
Shall madden others with my madness,
And shall disport for ever under Thy holy feet."

Who but He can therefore be the cherished object of our perennial devotion and love? It is love, that irresistible instinct, that experience of the heart and not of the intellect or of will, that hereditary impulse, that attraction for which there is no accounting, that strange yearning, that compels men, women, all human beings to fly into each other's arms and embrace. It is love that makes the life of one the duplicate of another, the happiness of one the ceaseless, tireless, life-long care of another. It is love that warms and thrills in the innermost self of man.

It is love, that, wherever it exists, seeks to find some means of communication with the beloved. The minstrel wanders through distant lands till the notes of his flute strike through prison bars to the ear of his captive king with whom he muses in the stillness of his heart. The lover binds his letter to the arrow's shaft and shoots it to the chamber on the tower-top where his lady-love, the queen of his heart, is immured. The heart of friend turns to friend and even though a thousand leagues may lie between, the missive finds its way from land to land, from sea to sea, from air to air. The expectant souls of the betrothed, advancing from mere exchange of glances to acts of courtesy, of gallantry, then to fiery passion, to plighting troth, find each other out unseen that love may communicate its thrill from heart to heart. The child utters its plaintive cry, awakens the dormant parental affection, flings its tender arms around its mother's neck, casts its charming smile and heavenly look towards the earthly parent and prattles the words that well up from the depths of its childish being. The husband leaves his work that for a moment he may go and look in his wife's

eyes and read again the mystery of their spiritual union. Love craves communion with the beloved as the first need of love. Business may stand still, the thirst for knowledge may be forgotten, the keenness of ambition may be blunted but affection needs to express itself to the beloved object.

In the same manner, the ardent and enthusiastic love of the soul for God, its most righteous and loving Father, in whom all its trust reposes and to whom all its most fervent aspirations ascend, needs to express itself in communion which is an irrepressible divine instinct and an overwhelming need of spiritual life. He alone has in fact made our soul to long after Him, to be satisfied indeed with nothing else in the whole universe short of seeing Him in all the beauty of His Holiness and Love and being bound to Him in the tenderest and sweetest communion.

Communion, then, will not be for seeking gifts, but for a conscious realisation of God's Presence with the self-denying love of a mother, the self-surrendering devotion of a wife; and the self-dedicating service of a devotee. And as the consciousness of His Presence is won, the intellectual life will be cleared; the moral life will receive the sap of a new vigour, the emotional life will pass out of anxiety and trouble into abiding peace and ecstatic joy till all our worship merges in glad thanks-giving to Him.

As it is delightful for the child and the mother to be together in the clasp of affection, for the poet and the muse to be together on the mountain-height of inspiration, for the sinner and the saviour to be together in the closet of confession, for the disciple and the master to be together in the cloister of reflection, for the spouse and the spouse to be together in the sanctuary of the home, so it is delightful for the *bhakta* and the Beloved to be together in the chamber of communion.

To draw close to the Beloved is the urge and to become one with the Beloved is the hunger and thirst of the soul. With the offering of adoration, we go to Him. And in communion, He gathers us unto Him that thus not merely thinking and feeling and rejoicing but losing ourselves in holy communion with Him, we may reach the fulfilment of all worship. He, the tender-hearted Father and Mother undoubtedly favours every one of His children with that communion, that fervid, whole-souled intensity of enjoyment, focussed in a single point of direct intimate touch with Him, the Beloved one—that direct breathing in of His Spirit which infuses an altogether new life into the soul and exalts it above all that is earthly and impure.

The attainment of this exalted condition even in this physical life is the human soul's goal. Says Rishi Yajnavalkya—“*This indeed is his true form, free from desires, free from evil, free from fear; now as a man when embraced by a beloved wife, knows nothing that is without, nothing that is within, thus this person when embraced by the Intelligent (pragna) Self knows nothing that is without, nothing that is within. This indeed is his true form, in which his wishes are fulfilled, in which the Self only is his wish, in which no wish is left,—free from any sorrow.*” Brihadaranyaka, Chapter IV. Sec. iii.—21.

What a splendid spectacle is suddenly opened up as soon as there is a contact of humanity with Divinity! Flashes of heavenly light instantaneously burst into view, illumine, enliven and inspire the soul. No sooner does the communing spirit touch the spirit of the Lord than the gushing stream of saving grace falls upon it and removes its accumulated sins and sorrows. In the first stage of communion, man is occasionally inspired; he breathes out his prayers and God breathes in His Spirit. But in the highest stage, man's aspiration and God's inspiration are continually exchanged with all the ease and force of natural breath. The Dove of

His Spirit descends upon him and he enters into deepest communion with Him, his Father. Divine life courses through his arteries and his thoughts, words and deeds are streams that flow from the fountain of inspiration. The Will of the son and the Will of the Father are thus identified in communion. The adoption of His Will is the highest act of our own, the abnegation only of our false self, the affirmation of the real and true. In other words, the human will is so thoroughly sanctified and attuned to God's Will as to become one with it.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE RISHIS' CONCEPTION OF THE PHENOMENA OF DEATH AND IMMORTALITY AND OF AFTER-LIFE.

It shall be my endeavour to show in this chapter that paradoxical as it may sound, yet it is true that it is God's love that had ordained the phenomenon of death. At first sight, it seems that in completely separating those who love one another, Death is more inconsistent with God's love than any other pain or trouble to which we are exposed. Love in its highest and purest form is wounded and crushed by the loss of love on either side and also by the total interruption of intercourse. Permanence of the emotion and the continuance of intercourse are essential to the happiness of true love. Death is therefore opposed to love and inconsistent with it so far as it breaks finally and completely all earthly intercourse between those who love one another. Such a parting is pitiful pain and cannot be anything else. Yet God kills and separates; and so far as this mortal life is concerned, there is no remedy, no redress. Take the case of a mother at the bed side of her sick child. Her one great passionate longing is to keep alive and sound the body of her child and to ward off the horrible event of a final separation.

This is the natural and inevitable condition of physical existence in these relations. The mother cannot help loving the child's body and wishing to preserve it and keep it near to her as long as she lives. We see the same desire intensely strong between husbands and wives, brothers and sisters and deeply attached friends. It needs no justification; it is an imperious instinct; but if we began to look for reasons for it, there are plenty of them and all well-grounded. All lives ought to be precious and all lives are precious to those who love them. The body is the sole means by which a loving intercourse can become possible or be maintained. Cut off the agency of the body and the intercourse ceases. And with that, of course, vanishes all the service, all the delight which loving service can confer on both the giver and the receiver. To us the death of our beloved must seem cruel. Seldom, indeed, is it anything but grievous at the time and for long after. How then can our God be a loving God?

From the above it is clear beyond all question that man and his Maker stand here on a very different ground. It is clear and certain that God does not love our bodies as we love the bodies of our dear ones. These bodies are mere things wanted by Him only for a short-term, to serve, we are sure, some good purpose; but only so long as He wants them and as they may serve His grander purposes which we do not see. If God may be said to love any material thing in the universe, it is a misuse of terms, for He cannot love it as a mother loves her babe, if He can deliberately part with it and destroy it, casting it away like a faded flower or a withered leaf.

Where then are we to look for any solution of this great mystery of Death in its antagonism to Love? In trying to probe into this mystery, we have to keep continuously before our minds the distinction between the material and the spiritual. All the material is visibly and certainly transient; nothing continues in one stay; forms and combi-

nations dissolve and disappear one after another so that the elements which composed them may pass into other forms and into new combinations. It is even so with the human body. It changes from the germ into the babe, from the babe into the youth, then into the man, and grows older and older till it begins to decay and at last to die. It is calculated that all the atoms which compose a human body are replaced by new atoms every seven years; so that an old person of 84 years has had twelve different bodies. Still the identity of person and memory remains and shows signs of permanence which are certainly absent from the body. Now, remember then that *we* are not the bodies in which we live and move and have intercourse one with another. We are non-material, super-material beings which for distinction's sake, we call spirits or souls as explained already in Chapter X *supra*. We trace ourselves therefore to Spirit and not to matter; to God himself and not to the blood of our parents, who only begot our bodies. We are the offspring of Him in whom dwells perfect intelligence, righteousness and Love. We are the offspring of God, for we too possess intelligence, goodness and love which are not material at all, but are spiritual in their very essence and can only have come from Spirit. But we have already seen that the possession of these spiritual faculties definitely and certainly proves the good purpose of our Maker in conferring them; and that is the same thing as saying that God is good and loving. Yes—but what is it that He loves? It is the spirit, the soul, the man, the woman, the child that he truly loves—not the bodies or houses in which those spirits dwell—but the precious and immortal tenants who occupy and use them for a brief space according to His will.

Whenever, therefore, the conditions of physical life are no longer according to nature possible for the soul to dwell in the body, when the last part of the pilgrim's journey has to be made in solitude with none but the presence of His

great Spirit as one's only companion, He, the Supreme Redeemer, sounds the bugle for retreat. He, the Master of the great household is opening the door of His divine Mansion and saying to us 'come'. And when He directs this clarion call, not a call to annihilation but to eternal life, instead of lamenting over it, we should obey and follow, go to Him, not murmuring, and trembling but as his children who have finished His work and for whom He has no more present need here. According to Plato, the end of all philosophy is to teach us how to die serenely. If in our various objectives in life we could steadily keep this memorable saying in view, death would be shorn of its terrible fears and stunning perplexities. We shall then be able to recognise God not as the terrific God, the appalling God, the God of Death, the God of dissolution, but as the redeeming God, the resuming God, the rejuvenating God, the eternally reliable God. Long have we in faithlessness thought of the soul as the bubble that bursts and breaks up in no time; but we have seen from what has been stated in the previous chapters that being securely held in God's embrace, it cannot fail. Its failure would be God's own discomfiture, its vanishing into nothingness His privation. Though limited, bounded, circumscribed by time and place, we are really even now enabled by moving events of life to rise to the wider and higher outlook transcending time and place. We should realise also the unmistakable fact that what truly counts, what really abides, is not deceptive change but the underlying permanence, that what truly constitutes the great value and worth of our existence is that it cannot be told out by time or hedged in by place but that even now, even on this earth, living in Him, incorporated in Him, our real life partakes of the Everlasting.

Accordingly, our Rishis of the Upanishads, the saints and sages, the prophets and martyrs who adorned the world, had habituated themselves to death even in this life by

repeated self-denials—their senses, their passions, their desires, entirely brought under the submission of the Holy Will of God. The great Sakya-Muni (Buddha) dies calmly at eighty years of age with such words: "Be earnest, be thoughtful, be holy. Keep steadfast watch over your own hearts. He who holds fast to the laws of discipline and faints not, he shall cross the ocean of life and make an end of sorrow." Saint Paul, aged seventy, cast in prison, and ready to be offered to the wild beasts at Rome, fearlessly exclaims: "My departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight. I have finished my course. I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness." One old man with such words on his dying lips proves the renewal of life in the uttermost verge of earthly decline. These souls were more alive in their so-called decline than rampant worldlings in the heyday of their youth. These noble souls had practised death even here, having died to the cravings of the flesh, to the temptations of the world, to self-interest, to the desire of honour, to the love of pleasure. The endurance of pain, the practice of austerity, the hardships of devout life form an essential part of this practice of death. To them, death was therefore clipped of its fears and dangers, and with all their mind and heart they could contemplate the glory of the prospect on the other shore. They have, therefore, lived in utter disdain of their temporary dwellings, to wit, their bodies, have scorned pain and death, have preferred death to dishonour, have died in unbearable torture—perhaps pitied those who inflicted the suffering—rather than tell a lie or profess to believe what their hearts denied, in the firm faith and unshakable conviction that they are not perishable bodies but immortal souls, born out of God's love, partaking though in an infinitely small measure, His Power, Intelligence, Love and Righteousness and therefore destined to live in His love to all eternity.

According to them, it was only out of God's Love, that we were born and only for God's sake that our bodies must die, and we, set free from the bondage of corruption, shall wing our flight into those realms of joy and glory which His loving Heart is surely preparing for us. It is this which really explains everything, which teaches us not to dread Death at all but to greet it as God's sweet messenger sent to call us to a brighter home. Says Saint Kabir, "The Guru is one ; and life and death, union and separation, are all His plays of joy." Death is therefore not an occasion for grief and lamentations but an opportunity for devout and reverential, though heart-heavy thanks-giving to Him.

Death will be more welcome to us than life itself when we feel and realise that the senses, the sentiments, the instincts, the perceptions, manifested in this body are only a feeble instalment of the thousand other faculties, which will burst on the expectant soul, when the bonds of the flesh fall away at last. The activities, the aspirations, the developments, the maturities, all remain, though their fleshy garments are cast away. Other forms, other senses, other media shall be given to us by the Supreme Being surpassing the earthly gifts, as the powers of the full-grown man surpass those of the infant. Greater than the joy that enraptures the born-blind at the sudden unveiling of midday glory, greater than the wonder that transports the born-deaf and mute when the sudden strains of divine music pour into their silent souls, will be the light, rapture and sense that animate the devout souls in their passage from this life to immortality.

Says Saadi, the Sufi poet : "When you are born you come crying while all around are smiling ; but when you die, see to it that you die smiling while all around are sobbing. Death is loss only unto those left behind, not unto the pilgrim himself who has gone or has to go ahead. Indulge thyself, it is not life to live ; but give thyself, it is not death to die." As Alexander Pope has put it in one of his terse

expressions, to the pilgrim of faith death is only languishing into life—going away into life, collapsing (as it were) into life. That death which means richer life, ampler vision, higher aspiration—that is the fee of the pilgrim soul.

Sri Rama'krishna Paramahansa thus describes in a heroic song the story of the fight of the soul with death.

"To arms ! To arms ! Oh man, death invades thy home in battle array. Get up into the chariot of faith, and arm thyself with the quiver of wisdom. Draw the mighty bow of love and hurl, hurl the divine arrow, the holy name of the Mother."

Under God's ordinance, Death holds inexorable sway over all objects, inorganic and organic, subject to time and space. Death was in the world ages and ages before man appeared, before the lowest reptiles and the still earlier monads, even in the earliest period of vegetable life. And long before what we technically call death, which is the dissolution of living bodies, there was the dissolution of inorganic substances, perpetual destruction of old forms in order to make new forms possible ; every step in evolution being marked and regulated and brought about by means of such destruction of form and recombination of the indestructible atoms. To us it is quite natural to think and speak of the universe, as we see it, *i.e.*, of the sun, moon and planets and the millions of suns which people space, as eternal and everlasting. But every single object among them all, says science, is and ever has been the subject of ceaseless change, passing from its birth to maturity and from maturity to decay and from decay to dissolution. The present forms of these galaxies of suns and worlds may change so slowly as to be absolutely unappreciable by human faculties, even if human life were to be prolonged for millions of years. Yet the several stages must be passed through till the final stage is reached, and all the glorious and stupendous suns in the universe will be at last put out and give

place to new heavens and new earths, according to the universal and invariable law which has doomed every tangible form to destruction. In the words of the Svetasvatara Upanishad, "*Rudra (God) creates all worlds, regulates all worlds by His Powers, preserves them and rolls them up at the end.*" The Old Testament of the Bible echoes the same truth when it declares—"Thou Lord, in the beginning, hast laid the foundations of the earth and the heavens are the work of Thine hands. They shall perish, but Thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shall thou fold them up and they shall be changed; but Thou art the same and Thine years shall not fail." No wonder, therefore, that all the living creatures on a planet like ours fall under the same law of dissolution. Would it not be a direct infringement of the universal law if our human forms were not to perish like everything else? Reason at least assures us that it is unreasonable to expect that mankind should be an exception to the universal law. But even Reason has far more to say about it than this. We even know now that the death of species of vegetables and animals has been invariably followed by the appearance of other species more suitable to the needs of the occupants of this planet and better suited to its altering conditions. Geology tells us how necessary was the death of whole races of creatures before their superior successors could be born or flourish. The survival of the fittest is one of the chief features in God's evolution.

In other words, our bodies, in short, are only part and parcel of that great surrounding visible universe, which, notwithstanding its majestic constancy and endurance, never continues in one stay, but is ever advancing from stage to stage and finally to dissolution. According to the Rishis, death is but a passage into the world of larger light and sweeter symphony, the peering through, as it were, the invisible veil into the realities of the life eternal, engendering as it does

in us the firm conviction that there must be an invisible spiritual sphere for which our souls were called into existence, that this earthly animal satisfaction is not our rest, not the haven for which the human spirit was launched on the ocean of life, not the home where we can reach the fulness of joy. Death is therefore God's divine ordinance. Says Yama, the God of Death, to Nachiketa in the Kathopanishad: "*One who thinks that this world alone exists and there is no future world, comes under my sway again and again. The good is one thing and the pleasant another. These two having different objects, bind man. It is well with him who accepts the good out of these two; but he who accepts the pleasant misses the real object of life. Men of little sense pursue outward objects of desire and so they are caught in the snare of death spread out on all sides. On the other hand, wise men, knowing immortality to be permanent, do not desire anything out of fleeting objects.*"

Considered from a purely physiological aspect, death is a condition of the prolificness of nature, the multiplicity of species, the succession of generations, the co-existence of the young and the old. And these things, it cannot reasonably be doubted, add immensely to the sum of animal happiness. At the same time, death is the king of terrors, the much dreaded enemy of mankind, even of animal kind. It is the shadow that mars our brightest landscape and casts a depressing gloom over the happiest events of life. It is the poison that lurks in the sweetest cup of enjoyment—the inexplicable mystery of existence which has blinded the keenest eye and baffled the most adventurous mind. At the last moment of our earthly career, the whole life is reflected in our memory and emerges from all the forgotten nooks and corners picture after picture, event after event. The dying brain dislodges memory with a strong supreme impulse and memory restores faithfully every impression that has been entrusted to it during the period of the brain's activity. That impression

and thought which were the strongest, naturally become the most vivid and survive all the rest. Recollection of evil deeds, of opportunities wasted, causes the unfortunate man indescribable agony and torture; while the consciousness of a life well spent in the love and service of God steadies him, makes him serene and cheerful.

Besides, the dying man is tortured by what are called 'spiritual fears'—fears of Divine wrath and of Hell-fire imbibed from false religions, fears which blight the existence of many a soul, keep it fast bound in the fetters of ignorance and superstition and practically shut it from a sight of God's infinite and universal love. Such fears as this aggravates intensely all other natural and bodily fears. Death is bad enough, but when you add to the fear of it the dread of coming torment, no wonder people are afraid to die.

No man dies insane or unconscious as some physiologists assert. Even a mad man or one in a fit of *delirium tremens* will have his instant of perfect lucidity at the moment of death though unable to say so to those present. The man may often appear dead, yet from the last pulsation, from and between the last throbbing of his heart and the moment when the last spark of animal heat leaves the body, the brain thinks and the ego lives over in those brief seconds his whole life. Philosophers and sages therefore advise those who assist at a death-bed to speak in whispers and enjoin perfect silence just after death has laid her clammy hand upon the body, lest they disturb the quiet ripple of thought and hinder the busy work of the past casting its reflection upon the veil of the future. The final stroke is sudden, consciousness leaves the body as instantaneously as the flame the wick.

This is how the famous Maharishi Sri Venkataranana of Tiruvannamalai, one of the foremost modern sages of

India, describes the last hours of his revered mother who passed a day in his hands in 1922 :—

“Innate tendencies, *vasanas* or subtle memories of past experience leading to future possibilities, became very active : scene after scene rolled before her in the subtle consciousness as the outer sense had already gone ; the soul was passing through a series of experience that might possibly have required many births of her, but for the quickening process worked out by the special touch given on the occasion ; the soul was at last disrobed of the subtle sheaths before it reached the final destination, the supreme Peace, Nirvana, Samadhi from which there is no return to ignorance.”

Says Rishi Sandilya in the Chandogya Upanishad “According to what his will is in this world, so will he be when he has departed his life.” Man's desires naturally persist and culminate in his dying thoughts which are therefore considered to be the most powerful agents in moulding his future. In fact, death itself is a miniature representation of all his thoughts and acts in life. Krishna who symbolises the Universal Self in man in the Bhagavad gita, says that he who departs this life meditating on Him attains to Him ; but in order to be able to keep the mind fixed on Him at the time of death, we must have ceaselessly practised it and suppressed the wanderings of the senses.

In verses 6 and 7 of the fourth Brahmana, fourth chapter of the Brihadaranyaka, Yajnavalkya speaks thus of liberation and the future life :—“And here there is this verse. “To whatever object a man's own mind is attached, to that he goes strenuously together with his deed, and having obtained the end (the last result) of whatever deed he does here on earth, he returns again from that world (which is the temporary reward of his deed) to this world of action.” So much for the man who desires. But as to the man who does not desire, who not desiring freed from desires is satisfied by his desires, or desires the Self only, his vital spirits do not depart elsewhere. Being Brahman he goes to Brahman. On this there is this verse : “When al

desires which once entered his heart are undone, then does the mortal become immortal, then he obtains Brahman."

Even this mysterious phenomenon of death which separates us from our nearest and dearest is a manifestation of God's love and divinely ordained for our own good in the furtherance of His holy purposes. How, it may be asked. Death prevents the many terrible effects which would ensue from decay, disease and sufferings of old age and other ghastly consequences of a very prolonged life on earth. If there were no death, we could not endure the awful monotony and the endless weariness of life's duties and cares and tolerate with patience the impossibility of any progress in knowledge and virtue. It is dreadful to imagine a world of men and women who never died, never lost their present conditions, but were doomed to live on here, on this isolated planet, without the smallest hope of release. How the mere thought of such a dreary future would poison every pleasure of the present hour! How our hearts would sink at the fearful outlook of the impossibility of our souls ever escaping from the bondage of flesh!

The most awful consequence of the banishment of death would be that this lively life of ours would be bereft of its children in a world in which everybody was old and jaded. Not a babe to be seen in all the wide world. Not a sound of childish laughter would ever be heard. All the divine lessons which we now learn from children would be impossible. All the sweetest part of our nature which we derive only and solely from the possession of children would never be developed at all. Love in its sweetest, highest and most beautiful form, would never appear to teach us the best and the highest we can think and know of God. Again it is the natural fear of death that goads man to activity and toil in all the spheres of life not only to sustain his being, the bodies of his kith and kin but also for making life more secure, more easy, free

from sickness and disease by the invention of scientific appliances and the promotion of the healing art. Death is therefore an inevitable sequence of life and a blessing in disguise, the direct manifestation of God's love.

Death has also forced us to see that, as already stated above, God does not love our bodies as we love the bodies of our dear ones. He has therefore ordained that when the body has fulfilled its purpose, the soul, the indestructible element, which partakes of the essence of divine life, divine freedom and divine self-will, must quit it and return to Him, its true Parent, and the house be pulled down and its materials dissolved into their original, elementary or atomic condition for serving some other divine purpose in the economy of God's Government. For, we know that when we die, the dead body in its putrefaction, in its transmutation into the original elements from which it was made, becomes living forces, which feed the life germs that crowd into its interior and exterior. As soon as the living organism expires, it becomes the home, the realm of innumerable life, the food for uncounted organisms, the source of known and unknown forces, which enter into the inexhaustible life that dwells in nature. Living, we diffuse life: dying, we diffuse life. Dissolved, or disintegrated, or gasified, the posthumous process is the result of another order of life; living germs produce it, matter dead enters into new cycles of life. Neither force dies, nor matter dies; and, then, will the highest life,—the life of the mind, heart, and soul, the life that compels all other life,—life, conscious spiritual God-life,—will that alone die? No; such a contingency is unthinkable.

We, fathers and mothers, doting on our children, should therefore never forget that they are but lent to us for a season, that we are merely custodians and keepers, stewards and trustees of God's love and that it is really His children he has put in our charge to make us feel the duty and the

honour, the privilege and the responsibility of a sacred trust. We should realise that we have no absolute rights of property in our children and that it is unjust to complain when He, the real owner, the Eternal Father, calls them to return to their eternal home, that we cannot do more than cheerfully surrendering ourselves to His Divine Will. We should take consolation in the sublime saying "The Lord hath given and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Again it is the fear of death that prompts us to realise how transient and even trifling are the concerns which belong to this life, how in everything mundane there is an element of disappointment and even gratification is fleeting; to look up, to look above the dust and rubbish of earthly possessions and pleasures, to "an inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away." Above all, it is the ordinance of death that teaches us that in the soul of man only can be found that perfect, incorruptible, unceasing peace and joy which the whole world can never give or take away.

Furthermore, examples are not wanting where scenes of grief or death are spurs to the religious instincts of man. The sudden death of a dear brother or sister, husband or wife, father or mother, commonly operates revolutions in our way of life by His Mercy. And the man or woman who would have remained a sunny garden flower, with no room for its roots and too much sun-shine for its head, by the falling of the walls or the neglect of the gardener, is made the banian of the forest, yielding shade and fruit to wide neighbourhoods of men, continually growing up and branching out and throwing down new roots that all the homing birds of life may fail not of cosy nests therein.

History is not wanting in cases where the sudden sight of a tragic calamity was the starting point in a memorable

career. The death of his friend Alexis by one stroke of heaven's lightning tolled the knell of Luther's worldly career. At once, he relinquished his studies and became a monk. The successive sight of an invalid, a corpse and a yogi impressed in indelible characters on Gautama's reflective mind the frailty and instability of the flesh and the strength and permanency of the spirit. His whole idea of the universe around him and the world within him passed through a complete circle of revolution. Overpowered by profound sympathy for the suffering and agony of animal and human life, he leaves an insipid, meaningless world behind him and goes in quest of that heavenly beatitude which alone can satisfy the thirst and the hunger of a restless soul and emancipate humanity from the miseries of the thralldom of the self.

Saint Tukaram also passed through a similar ordeal; his path to glory lay through the same thorny tract. He was cradled into religion by grief and care; he learnt in acute suffering, what he taught in inspiring song. His father, mother, dear wife and tender son fast followed each other to a lamented grave. To make the cup of his sorrow brimful, famine set in; the business failed; mishaps visited him in battalions. The remaining wife—for Tukaram was twice married—greeted him only with abuse and reproach; and in this vast wild of life he did not find a single redeeming feature or one soothing companion. The world lay before him in its charmless monotony; this direless succession of unnumbered woes completely disconcerted his mind; and he had nothing left but the native resources of his own self to fall back upon. The soul at last rose triumphant; and the intending aim of an All-guiding Providence was accomplished. Tukaram's soul embraced the feet of God with thrice-sacred hallelujahs; and reverence for the All-merciful and practical love for His children became the sole concerns of his life.

We have already seen that the individual self, far from being the product of matter, is a part of the Supreme Self, which is the support and reality of all things. When this theory is understood and accepted, all fears of the destruction of the individual self disappear and it is seen that it is as indestructible as the Supreme Self, sharing in His eternity and immortality.

Besides, every atom of matter is believed by science to be absolutely indestructible. So also is every smallest quantity of force or energy. Force may assume diverse forms; it may be transmuted from one expression to another. If these constituents of Nature are able to survive the shock of change, if all else is carefully guarded by Nature from destruction, is it likely that the intelligent soul, the conscious unit, the spiritual force, which is the most exalted of all earthly things, perishes at the end of this short life? Needless to add that spiritual force is the highest force. Matter is only its *shape* and its form; and if material force is persistent and imperishable, no one can dare say that spiritual force is the only victim of death. I repeat that such a contingency is inconceivable.

Further, every order of organised sentient being below man has a sphere of development and action commensurate with its capacities. Unless man be a solitary exception to the general order, he must also have such a sphere. But it is evident that in this *hard-pressed* life of earth and earthly life, his vast capacities and desires cannot fulfil themselves. If his chances of development are like those of his fellow-creatures, he must have an existence hereafter to give the opportunities not supplied here.

Again, Love desires the constant companionship of its object; it cannot think of separating from the latter. It seeks the good of its object and cannot think of any end or limit to this good. Man's limitation in knowledge

and power prevents him from keeping the object of His love in his company and being ever active in its welfare. If this does not apply to God who is infinite in knowledge and power and perfect in goodness. The separation of a child from the Supreme Father and Mother is impossible and no limit can be imagined of the child's good, in achieving which the Supreme Parent is ever active. Infinite knowledge, power, holiness, beauty and sweetness are treasured in His store. That He will impart these to His children ever and ever, is the only truth consistent with his perfect nature.

Whatever happens to the body at death, the souls of God's dear children who so cling to Him in love and faith are positively sure of never fading away out of His presence never going out of His hand. It is in the highest degree improbable that He would create and encourage such passionate affection towards Himself, knowing all the while that with one stroke of the Scythe of Death, all this loving intercourse would absolutely come to an end ever more. And if, further we see what grand endeavours and noble sacrifices have been made during this life for the one sole purpose of being good and growing better, and with the one chief hope of becoming at last so pure and holy as perfectly to satisfy the requisition of a perfectly Holy and Loving God, then we may fairly say that nothing is so improbable as that a good God would disappoint those high and disinterested hopes and reward those conscientious sacrifices by ruthless, heartless extinction. Were that possible, it would be a servile flattery and conscious falsehood to say that He is *Anandam* as proclaimed by the Rishis.

To take even lower ground, it seems highly improbable that God takes no cognizance of the true and beautiful love which sometimes exists between us in our several relations and that He separates finally and for ever at death the souls which truly loved each other on earth. At nightfall,

before a journey, or when long and painful earthly separation has to be borne, we could hardly bring ourselves to say "farewell," or even "goodnight," were it not for the strong hope within us that the parting is only for a time and before many hours, or days or months, or years are passed, we shall be united to those we love. It is just that hope that saves us from a torment too great to bear. So with the bitter pains of separation by death, it is sometimes the only consolation left that in some new, some utterly unimagined life beyond the grave we earnestly hope and expect to meet again in wonder, love and praise. The very failure of our best endeavours here, the cruel disappointments of our life and love, the unfinished work, the unsolved problems, the unrighted wrongs of this lower life, all tend to strengthen, the very foundations of that hope for a life to come and bring it to the verge of a certain conviction. The more we need God here on earth to help us to be good, the more certainly we trust that in another world, He will fulfil and over-pass our highest desires and when we wake up after His likeness, we shall be satisfied therewith.

Again the moment we admit the obvious spiritual nature which, as men, we inherit and possess and transmit—in the sublime functions of intellect, in the solemn warnings and sanctions of conscience and in the exquisite indulgence of pure love—we not only see clearly a world of life and activity high and far out of reach of the laboratory or the charnel-house of Nature, but perceive likewise with the eye of faith, most reasonable faith—that One, infinitely higher and holier and more loving than the best amongst us all, lives and rules over the chaos of material things, lives and creates, preserves, blesses, blights, and dissolves according to His good pleasure; lives and rules so that what seemed to us only chaos is no longer chaos but is order and progress and full of gracious and high promise for every unsatisfied or

sorrowing creature. Yes, *lives* and *loves* so that every spirit which He has begotten, whether of man, beast, bird, fish, reptile, or insect, of tree or flower, of mountain, stream or ocean, nay, of earth and sun and stars, if spirits they have shall never perish, shall never drop from His hand of love even though every form in which those spirits now dwell be broken up and dissolved, and the whole panorama of the universe pass away and "leave not a wrack behind."

When we see this, a streak of dawn steals in upon us in our gloom and we then begin to know and to feel that the material only exists for the sake of the spiritual, that all the suffering, all the disasters, all the deaths in the world are but ministering angels, angels ministering to the needs of our higher life—of the life of the soul, of which we know so much less than of the life of our mortal frame, but which we believe to be immortal and a partaker of the Divine nature. There is no doubt therefore that God has designed even the humblest of His children to be the pilgrim of eternity, ever advancing towards the goal of immortality. To this end, He necessarily withdraws from the eyes of physical sight the familiar forms endeared by continuous companionship. Cased in the physical body, the spirit cannot but travail as the exceptional or the unforeseen happens; yet the travail He changes even into the birth-throe of a new assurance; as even in the experience of the humblest of His devotees, what is withdrawn from the eyes of flesh, is restored to the heart of grace and what is veiled behind the seen is made manifest in the unseen. And even as autumn with its denudations and winter with its mists are but the foreshadowing harbingers, the proclaiming heralds of the coming spring, even so, the autumn of age and the winter of decline disclose themselves unto the spirit as the precursive hints of the spring of that deathless life, when the flower that seems to have faded here, blooms afresh as the amaranth in the newer, higher region.

Again, it is impossible that the dear ones who have gone before us should vanish into nothingness. Annihilation is an unthinkable condition in our relationship to God. Who can destroy life when He is all life. The child gone, the parent gone, the brother gone, the sister gone, the wife gone, the husband gone, but whither have they gone? They have not gone out, but they have gone in. They are all gone into the world of light. They are all safe and rejoicing in His smile. They appear to have vanished out of our sight because they have come so very close to the heart. Does not the eye which cannot see itself, see all in God? Verily, as the sages say: "*Death is the heart of life.*" Every cemetery, every burial place, every cremation ground is a standing reminder of God's proclamation, that the fleeting, perishable, earth-born breath of man is necessarily and beneficially destined to fail, but the enduring, imperishable, God-breathed spirit is wafted onward and upward, home-ward and heaven-ward, that what is withdrawn from our physical eye is resumed into His embracing heart, and that every earthly winter by His wonderful transforming grace changes into an everlasting heavenly spring, where not the sense but the soul constitutes the vinculum of comradeship. We thus clearly perceive the truth proclaimed by the Rishis that death is not the abolition of the sun but only the extinction of the lamp in the morning light, not the lapse into nothingness but the sublimation into all-ness, that it is not the vanquishment of life but its translation into a new life, that it is the dissolution of two for the purpose of resolution into one of reunion in closer companionship, fuller fellowship and truer love. Thus to the eye of living faith, there is no death but only transition, and the chastening ministrations of sorrow tend to cure the repining of the soul and deepen its resignation to the Divine decree.

More than all, it is God Himself who generates, fosters and strengthens in us a belief in the immortality of the soul,

and fills us with the expectation of a nobler, purer and a happier life than here. The attainment by us of complete goodness and blessedness, love and righteousness, being the holy purpose of God in begetting the human soul, a human being cannot possibly reach the full perfection within the limits of earthly life. Yet, nothing short of perpetual advance in knowledge can satisfy his mind. Nothing short of perpetual advance in righteousness can satisfy his conscience. Nothing short of perpetual contact with those he loves and perpetual opportunity for service and self-sacrifice would satisfy his heart. If this hope of full fruition be ever entertained at all, reason tells us it must be realised in a life to come or not at all. The highest and purest and noblest aspirations of the soul of man will be frustrated unless there be a life to come, the precise nature of which, though it is not given for us to know, depends on our own actions (Karma).

Again, we know intuitively that every moral action must have a moral effect. If the effect is pleasant, the pleasantness is only incidental; it must lead to a certain elevation or degradation of the soul, as the case may be, but ultimately to the former—to moral progress. If the effect is painful, the pain is only an instrument, like pleasure, for bringing about a certain moral effect. Moral actions, again, have a certain collective effect. They all lead to the building of a moral character—a character with fixed tendencies to thoughts, feelings and actions of a definite nature. Every rational being—and a rational being must be moral by virtue of his possessing reason—has such a character at the time of death and the law of *karma* demands that this character must be perpetuated—must continue to have the effects which exist potentially in the moral forces embodied in it. To suppose a cessation of life and activity at the destruction of the body, is, first of all, to suppose a violation of the law of universal causation understood in its broadest

sense. The law of causation requires not only that every cause should have an effect but that the effect should be adequate to the cause. Human character is an aggregate of moral causes, moral forces; its effects also must therefore be moral, and there can be no moral effects in the true sense without a conscious personal centre of activity—without the perpetuation of the lives of moral agents. Again to suppose an extinction of the soul at the death of the body is to pronounce rational and moral life as purposelless,—to deny the moral order of the universe and to conceive it as the play of blind forces. If therefore there is a moral order in the universe, if rational life has a purpose, that purpose cannot be anything higher than moral progress—the attainment of perfection by rational beings—and such a purpose necessarily requires the perpetuation of the conscious life of individuals.

Again, what better proof can there be of our immortality than the fact of God's own existence and His revelation in nature and in man? He has called us "sons" and has already made plain to us that He is our Father. Who are we, unless there is from us the return call, 'Mother,' 'Father,' 'Parent'? If our lips are thus sweetened and made pure and sacred, we are no longer mortals, beings that must die. We are conscious children of God; and there is no death. The soul is undying as long as God lives and is its Parent. There is no death in God's creation. Man calls that death which God designs to be resurrection. He is the God of sublimation, of transfiguration, of regeneration, into ever-ascending, ever-lasting life; He is the guarantee that not one iota shall lapse and not one soul shall vanish so as to defeat the very end and purpose of His creation—life and love in ever-increasing abundance. This truth has been forcibly expressed by a celebrated English poet in the following stanza:—

*"But souls that of His own good life partake,
He loveth as His own Self; dear as His eyes,
They are to Him. He will never them forsake;
When they shall die, He Himself shall die;
They live, they live, in blest Eternity."*

Life on earth is no measure of life beyond death, but the highest life here is an unfailing earnest of a still higher life elsewhere. Death gains upon us fast enough, but immortality gains faster still. The daily death is the death of the flesh which changes and decays, and is yet revived without our knowing it. The daily life is the sense of health, growing strength, increasing joy and assurance in communion with the deathless realities of the Spirit. Called up to life from a thousand forms of decay,—revived, renewed, regenerated day after day, under the Eternal's keeping,—none need fear that the last stage of change is without hope or promise.

Furthermore, the whole creation is full of promise of the immortality which God has in store for us. The voice of nature interrogates man, catechises him, asks, "Who art thou, whence coming and whither going?" And his reply, the reply of all ages, the reply of all countries, the reply of all nations, has been "I am the child of God, the offspring of His love; I am the heir of immortality."

Who would have dreamt that this earth as it was started on its revolution in space around the sun, then a seething mass of molten minerals enveloped in steam and fog, would be marvellously dressed in beauty and brightness in due time and filled with millions of plants and animals? Who that looks for the first time upon the blackened skeletons of trees in autumn can think that the vernal blooms will return once more and clothe everything in colour and beauty? Who that looks for the first time upon the little white or mottled egg can think that it is the symbol of sweet song and variegated plumage into which that feathered angel, the

bird, will grow as it floods the sky with its untaught music? Every work of God's hand is full of promise; but it is promise fulfilled; it makes our hope and faith certain. If we doubt not amidst the night's darkness that tomorrow's sun will rise, amidst the cold rains of October and November that the glories of spring and summer will revisit the earth, that youth will succeed infancy, that the maturities of manhood will follow youth's indiscretions, why doubt that immortality will succeed death? All scriptures of all nations promise immortality; all the prophets, saints, philosophers foretell and forestall immortality; all humanity expects immortality; all moral inequalities demand immortality; all evolutions anticipate immortality. The earth promises heaven and life promises immortality.

What, then, is to be understood by living an immortal life in God? A death and a rebirth, death to sin, rebirth in the Spirit. We have experience of death. Death is a process, not an act; a continuous change, a continuous unfolding. Not even does a mustard seed die; dying and disappearing, it unfolds, produces a hundred-fold of its kind. The flesh is continually renewed like a garment; the spirit is also renewed. The infant has died to, or outgrown foetal life, the boy has died to infancy, the youth to boyhood and so on to manhood and old age; and, though we should be wise to combine the excellences of all these conditions into the unity of perfect life, we should be unwise if we exchange what we have gained for what we have lost. We have lost perhaps in animal spirits, but gained in the spirit immortal. We have lost the world somewhat, but in losing we have gained it all the more, because we have gained both God and man.

Besides immortality, another fundamental idea which religion engenders in man is *heaven*. Men have described heaven in various ways according to their tastes and aspirations. As a religious idea, *heaven* has been generally held

to combine in its elements purity, blessedness, communion with God, but indefinitely varied and modified—as all religious ideas are varied and modified—by different forms of worship, by different modes of thought, by different habits of life. Accordingly, some have looked for their heaven above the clouds, environed with all the splendour of the stars; others in the central depths of the earth and the shady groves of Elysium, where happy spirits wander and hold delighted converse. According to some, heaven is a place of sensuous delights of a grosser or more refined species; while some have thought of the islands of the blest in some remote and untraversed ocean, where the spirits of the just shall congregate and free from all that embittered their previous life, enjoy its full fruition. The planets in succession have been, as it were, seized upon by others and appropriated for heaven with all their diversities and with all their brilliance, and whatever the wit and fancy of man could devise has been supplied in order to render them more worthy of being the abodes of exalted souls. These latter have sometimes been pictured as advancing from one world to another until they reached the throne of the Deity erected in the great central sin. From there, the Deity is believed to be shedding forth its moral light and life as well as the beams of material light upon a surrounding and adoring universe.

The purification by which heaven is obtained has been similarly diversified. There has been the purgatory in which souls after death are purified from venial sins and otherwise rendered fit for heaven after suffering for a time. There has been the *Hades*, the invisible under-world, the abode of the departed, considered as a permanent hell by some and as an intermediate state of purification by others. Again there is the corrective hell on which one class has counted, while another class has believed, as a fit place for the unbelievers, the rejected, the cast-away, in a permanent hell. In all the variations of these conceptions, we see human nature

striving after the chief good and calling it by the name of heaven, because it has adopted the thought as a religious idea and the pursuit as a religious course of action—the spiritual life—the life of God in the soul of man.

“In Islamic Cosmogony,” says a Muslim Sufi, “there are seven skies and eight heavens. If so, where are they located? Seven of the eight heavens are in the seven skies and the eighth is in your heart. When that eighth heaven—the highest heaven, aye, the true heaven,—has been received into thee, thou art not a denizen of heaven but the abode of heaven. So God is not in heaven; but heaven is in God—Heaven is God Himself.”

Yet some others believe in what is called *Nirvana* which, as stated by Madame Blavatsky, the renowned theosophist, represents the dogma of the spirit's immortality, its intimate union with the Great Existence and not annihilation. According to her, “A spirit reaching such a state becomes a part of the integral whole, but never loses its individuality for all that. Henceforth, the spirit lives spiritually, without any fear of further modifications of form; for, form pertains to matter and the state of *Nirvana* implies a complete purification or a final riddance from even the most sublimated particle of matter, a final re-union with God, coincident with the perfection of the human spirit by its ultimate disembarassment of matter. It is the very opposite of personal annihilation.”

The hope of heaven is supremely the hope of seeing God—of finding faith swallowed up in something which to the spiritual eye is sight. And that beatific vision means the seeing that God is God, as we have adored Him, the infinitely just and loving, in whose domain all is right for all and for ever. The sense of wrong and injustice around us which crushes now, is then to be lifted for ever. The pity which now makes our hearts ache and bleed, is then to be changed for rejoicing in the joy of all God's creatures. In other

words, from things that are seen we are insensibly carried to things that are not seen. But what is the magical *nexus*? What is the bridge of wonders that travels from the world to eternity? The Chandogya Upanishad likens the Paramatma to the great bridge or bank. "*Therefore he who has crossed that bank, if blind, ceases to be blind; if wounded, ceases to be wounded; if afflicted, ceases to be afflicted. Therefore when that bank has been crossed, night becomes day indeed, for the world of Brahman is lighted up once for all.*"

Now coming to our own Rishis of the Upanishads, we find that though they are all unanimous in proclaiming the immortality of the human soul, yet they differ considerably as regards their conceptions of the conditions of life after death. Many of them inculcate the doctrine of Karma—the correspondence between cause and effect, good and bad actions in this life leading inexorably to higher or lower worlds hereafter. The conditions of the present existence are considered to be the result of actions of the past life. In other words, the well-known doctrine of transmigration, '*a complicated itinerary*' of the soul from lower to higher forms of existence and *vice versa*, has been elaborated by the Rishis. In this, their poetic but unscientific imagination also seems to have played no small part. For, the reverse process—from humanity to animality, seems quite improbable in the light of both natural and moral science of the present day. Progress from seed to tree, from the jelly-fish to the highest mammalia, from child to man, from the lowest barbarism to the highest civilisation, is the unalterable order of Nature and the irreversible law of Evolution. The latter law which is operative not only in the physical world but also in the sphere of philosophy and ethics, of culture and the arts, and even strikingly so in theology and religion, has declared and proved that man had risen, *not fallen*, had risen out of a state of savagery hardly conceivable by us and that the whole history of our race had been development from lower

to higher conditions and faculties and not *vice versa*. Accordingly, while the collective teachings of the Upanishads inspire the hope that we shall one day be '*gods*' and inherit and partake of the divine blessedness which belongs to moral perfection, they leave no room for the fear, when interpreted scientifically, that we may one day descend to the brute condition from which we have risen.

For obvious reasons, no rational religion has a right to assert dogmatically the future conditions of our present life. What it asserts must be in the nature of a probable belief, an opinion, an inference, a speculation and not a scientifically demonstrated certainty. I have therefore given below the arguments for and against re-incarnation (re-birth) leaving the intelligent reader to form his own conclusion.

According to the advocates of re-incarnation, the formation of a soul, i.e., of a complex intellectual and moral organism in the course of a few months or a few years is an impossibility. We are born with definite intellectual and moral characters. Circumstances indeed affect and contribute to the formation of character; they, however, do not act upon empty minds and souls equal and identical in their blankness, but upon clearly defined moral power and tendencies of infinite variety both in quality and quantity. If, in mature life, all formations, whether intellectual or moral demand a history, an explanation in the form of a series of previous actions, and all differences a difference of history, does not the complexity and variety of endowments with which our present life begins demand a similar explanation, a similar history projected into the unknown past? Again the conditions of ethical progress would apparently be absent in a disembodied existence. The ethical life must be social. There is neither morality nor spirituality for an isolated disembodied being. Virtue is indeed personal, individual. There is no meaning in the purity of a society in which the

individuals are not pure. But the purity of individuals and their continued growth in righteousness imply their inclusion in a society of which the members owe duties to one another, and in which a free exchange of thoughts and sentiments and an active co-operation in good work are possible. These things are inconceivable in a state of existence in which souls are disembodied; for it is through our bodies that we are able to communicate with one another. The very conditions of that spiritual life, then, which make immortality necessary and desirable, require that souls should be reborn either in this very world or in others more or less similar to this.

It is further urged that the necessity for reincarnation lies in the fact, that, though the acquired spiritual possessions of the individual remain intact after death in the Universal Self, they remain there unmanifested, not as the objects of the finite self's distinct consciousness. Their manifestation requires a body with senses and organs. This, they declare, is proved by the difference between sleep and waking. The self's activity in the waking state is in abeyance in sound sleep when the organs of knowledge are inactive. The individual self is not indeed destroyed in the absence of a fresh body. It is naturally indestructible, but until it gets a fresh body, it will remain unmanifested as in dreamless sleep. It will not experience the results of its *Karma*; its spiritual progress will remain in abeyance. Its desires will inevitably lead it towards re-incarnation,—will make a fresh body for it. In other words, the disembodied *Ego*, through the undying desire in him unconsciously furnishes the conditions of his successive self-procreations in various forms which depend on his mental state and *karma*, the good or bad deeds of his preceding existence, commonly called "merit and demerit."

But those who object to the theory of re-incarnation say—"If the self is born again, if a grown-up self becomes

an infant again, all its spiritual possessions are destroyed and it has to recommence its education." The advocates of re-incarnation do not admit this. They say, "What is learnt in each life is stored up in the form of mental powers and is remanifested in this form in the next life. This explains the difference of power in infants, some advancing quickly and some lagging behind."

But, ask their opponents—"Unless the memory of a previous life is reproduced in the succeeding life, unless, specially, there is a consciousness of identity between the preceding and the following life, how is progress possible? Does not the enjoyment or suffering of the fruits of action which have passed out of memory involve an apparent injustice?" This question is thus answered by the protagonists of re-birth. "In this life too there is an appearance and disappearance of memory; the memory of the whole life is never present at a time; on the contrary, in sound sleep, all memory, even the sense of self-identity, disappears and re-appears according to our needs. What takes place in re-birth is not quite unlike this. The stored-up memory and possessions of a finite self are preserved in the Omniscient Being and remanifested in the former's succeeding life. The manifestation of power is clearly seen in a new-born child. Some reminiscences also are perhaps manifested though the infant cannot express them in the absence of the power of speaking. Some specially gifted children give expression to them as they learnt to speak. In many cases these reminiscences are choked and pushed back by new experiences with the progress of age. In some cases, the memory of previous births re-appears in old people. This is perhaps caused by the sight or hearing of something connected with the previous life. According to the law of association of ideas, the objects seen or heard bring back reminiscences of the previous life."

Again, the richness and complexity of our minds even at the moment of birth and their speedy development on definite lines under the varying circumstances of this life point to a long mental history through which we must have passed in the unremembered past. History is not wanting in cases of precocious development among children. Mangiamelo, a shepherd, was a calculating automatic machine when only five years old. Zerab Colburn could solve the most puzzling mathematical problems when under eight years of age. Blind Tom, a born slave and a typical Negro, with a very poor intellect, became the master of music without ever being taught. Mozart, the great musician, could repeat a sonata when he was only four years and wrote an opera at eight. All such cases cannot, it is urged, be accounted for by the theory of heredity but only by the doctrine of previous births.

Again, if man's body is historically linked to, being the development of, the bodies of lower animals, where is the unreasonableness of thinking that this soul also has passed through a similar process of gradual development, having animated lower organisms in the more remote periods of its pre-existence, gaining in intelligence and moral strength as it migrated into higher and higher organisms and at last attaining humanity both physically and spiritually?

According to the cult of the Theosophical Society, the round of births to which the individual self is subject before its union with the Supreme Self is thus described by Dr. Annie Besant :—

“ . . . All this evolution proceeds under the law of causation, each cause working out its due effect. This is the law of Karma, that returns to every man exactly the results of his sowing. He sows his Karma in the world of matter, he reaps it partially in the other two worlds and there assimilates the results of his thinking ; then he returns to earth, the creature of his own making, to work out Karma belonging to this earth ; so he grows life after life, being “ a creature of reflection ” ; what he reflects on in this life, he becomes the same

hereafter. In this way he climbs from stage to stage with ever-expanding consciousness, sheath after sheath developing within him, and each one a vehicle of consciousness. As he develops, he expands his consciousness to embrace one world after another—the stages of consciousness corresponding to those three worlds being the states of Jagrat, Svapna and Susupti. Consciousness expands, embracing each world in turn, until man is the master and sovereign where at first he was the child and the student. Then rising yet higher, he escapes from the wheel of births and deaths; he passes from the body of the moon, as it is technically called, into the body of the sun, and when this is completely mastered he comes back no more to enforced birth. Rising to the Turiya state he attains the Self, clad only in the Ananda-maya-kosa. Having definitely unified his consciousness to that point, he is beyond the three worlds and their revolving wheel. He can pass into, expand into, the Nirvanic consciousness, the all-embracing, the divine. Jivatman—thrown forth at first in the uttermost ignorance, enveloped in Avidya with all its powers germinal, in latency not in activity—is enwrapped in sheath after sheath of matter in order that, through the sheaths, it may come into contact with all the regions of the universe, that in each it may, by these contacts, bring forth into manifestation the powers belonging to that region at first latent in itself, until at last all the powers are developed, the sheaths are purified, Avidya is transcended and man knows that the Self of the universe and his own self are one; he finds his goal, he becomes Brahman; that which he ever was potentially he becomes actively and in realisation.”

The opponents of the doctrine of re-incarnation, however, point to the results of the scientific study of the phenomena of Spiritualism by the Society for Psychical Research which, they say, establish among others the existence of a world of disembodied spirits of those who have shaken off this mortal coil and periodical communications and intercourses with their surviving kith and kin here through what are called mediums.

We see in this world a stupendous machinery for alternate production and destruction of organic and inorganic forms of what we call matter; a perpetual round of birth, growth, decay and death. Is this material world, then, the only

world that exists? Is there no world of spirit, of non-material existences in which God and the spirits of all, once before flesh, live and move and have their being?

Were the present life the result of our actions in a previous existence, the latter must also be the result of the one preceding it. And so, the process, when logically pursued, leads us back into the remotest unremembered past. No matter what intermediate causes or agencies there may have been for the cycle of such births, we cannot be satisfied to stop with any of these, but should proceed further and further back seeking the very first *Cause* which must have first started the series. So there must be a beginning for the manifestation of every self in the human body, not as the result of a previous karma but according to the mysterious unfathomable design and purpose of the Supreme Being, the Great First Cause. Why should not the present life itself be considered as the result of such design and purpose? Belief in a previous life does not therefore help us appreciably to solve the mystery of human existence. We see wonderful infinite varieties of organisms in the vegetable and the animal world, from a tapering thorn lying obscure in a way-side hedge to a sweet-smelling rose blossoming as the queen of a garden, from an insignificant crawling worm living under the perennial risk of being trodden under foot, to a fierce, terror-inspiring lion, the king of the forest. All these organisms are designed each for a particular purpose and testify to the majesty and glory of the Creator. Why should not the same be said of the creation of human beings in infinite varieties?

The opponents of re-incarnation look upon human life as an evolution, beginning in darkness, surrounded for months by the pre-natal environment, and sustained from the mother's life; then born into the light and air of our common world to spend a few years amidst the environment of earthly sky and field and human society, sustained by physical food;

and then born once more into a higher world still, the world of pure spirit—our life, however, being one and the same life through all the three stages, only expanded in each new state according to its new and larger conditions. Just what the conditions of the life beyond this will be then we do not know; nor do we think it profitable to speculate much on the subject. It is enough to believe that they will be such as will allow us larger scope for our powers of thought and love, and that waking up on that side exactly the same in character that we went to sleep on this side, we shall, under the freer and better conditions of that world, go forward to a career of progress and growth. Thus we do not think of this life and the coming life as two, but as only one life—*viz.*, the simple, grand, immortal life—which we have already begun to live and expect to go on living for ever. And consequently, our relatives and friends, whom we call dead, we think of as not really dead, but as living right on, only they are beyond the veil, while we remain this side.

In reply to those who urge that our unembodied soul is incapable of progress or growth, their opponents ask and argue thus: *Is the world beyond the grave so barren of growing life, or is the etherial spark in us so helplessly dependent upon a fleshy cover, that banished its heavenly abode it must inevitably and repeatedly enter a darksome house of mortal clay for any progress in wisdom and holiness to be possible?* Are the post-sepulchral regions utterly foreign to refined aspirations and sublime activities? Is the final goal of man, after all, sheer inactivity, a dormancy—a dormancy disturbed by no dream? That, we think, is the only legitimate inference from the theory that an unembodied soul is incapable of progress or growth.

When the Rishi of the Kathopanishad says that "*the Supreme Being who is the Cause of all causes is without form and without suffering*", the implication necessarily is that in an embodied form, suffering and sorrow are inescapable.

A God who is all Love will not torture his own begotten child by consigning it to a series of births.

Besides, love never dies. When our beloved are lost, we love them all the more; and we feel we have their love, wherever and in whatsoever state they abide. The higher and purer our nature, the more immortal our love. If this love be from God, not from selfishness or worldliness, it carries the proof of its own immortality. It would be the cruellest delusion to our hearts and consciences, if this were not so, if the highest love and craving for union missed their objects. We must therefore heartily believe in mutual recognition and re-union in heaven. Heaven would be no heaven without our dear ones.

Whether we rise to heaven or are reborn there, surely our life on earth is a prelude to the eternal harmonies afterward. It is sure also that we do not come back here. Who is not tired of fighting the tyrannies of the flesh, the passions and impulses of the senses that rise unceasingly like the tides of the sea? This poor patch of carnal form is unfit for the glories of eternal promise. It is unfit even here; how much more hereafter? Therefore, let us not think that flesh and blood of which we are getting tired already, have any part in the immortal life in God reserved for us.

Is it not possible for a good, loving and gracious God, to reserve a permanent place for us in His household for the uninterrupted continuance in a spiritual medium of our moral and spiritual life so poorly begun here—a life of aspiring activities and unfinished destinies? Is it consistent with God's eternal justice and equity, no less than with His love and mercy, to allow us to grovel in these filthy material bodies with their imbecilities, infidelities, despairs and flaws which make existence often a burden even to the best and wisest of men? Is it probable that our Supreme Father will blast

our life-long cherished hope of seeing and being reunited in the higher relations of spiritual nature with those beloved of us who have preceded us—a hope that the parting is only for a short-term—a hope that saves us from a torment too great to bear—a hope that sustains us in bearing the burden of our further life with resignation and fortitude,—a hope kindled in us by God alone, an unbroken fulfilment of which is guaranteed by the light of His own love to us? Is it conceivable that our Father Supreme and Mother Divine will, by confining us in these perishable bodies through a series of births, hinder our spiritual and moral life in the path of increasing progress and ever-lasting advance towards Him for living the larger life, the life of holier self-consecration, for attaining goodness of character with all the blessedness of purity and peace, happiness and bliss which that state involves, for adoring and enjoying constant communion with Him in the august assembly and the glorious company of all good men, saints and sages, unencumbered and untrammelled by the hindrances and distractions of a mortal life, for attaining eventually a state of an uninterrupted consciousness of unity with Him—a state of unmixed bliss and unspotted holiness—and above all for remaining in that blessed condition filled with new life and purified by His grace, eternally united in wisdom, love and joy with His infinite wisdom, love and joy, even as shadow unto light?

It will be seen from the above controversy that among our own people themselves, there are vast divergences of opinion on the doctrine of re-birth in a material body. The Brahmo Samajists, the Arya Samajists, the Theosophists, the Spiritualists have their own particular theories. Thus there is a good deal of obscurity on the subject of the particular form which our future life takes. We must keep our minds open and receive whatever truths that have been or may be scientifically established.

According to some Rishis, there is no transmigration of the soul after death, no descent again into the earth but only entry into the Brahman. Taittiriya - III - 1, says: "*That from which these creatures are born, through which, they, being born, live and into which they return and enter, seek to know that well.*" Mundaka II - i - 1, says: "*This is true: As sparks similar to fire, come out of a blazing fire by thousands, so, my dear, various creatures come out of the undecaying One and also return to it.*" In Chandogya-VI-viii-6, Rishi Uddalaka Aruni says: "*When a man departs from hence, his speech is merged in his mind, his mind in his breath, his breath in heat (fire), heat in the Highest Being.*" As observed by Dr. Deussen, "According to the words of the text, however, nothing further is implied here than the thought that the organs, manas, prana and speech, as they have been derived according to Chandogya (VI - v) by means of food, water and heat from the "One being without a second," so in a similar way at death they are again resolved into it as the Supreme God-head. Brahman being the womb whence all living beings proceed, it was of course natural for the Rishis to assume that they return at death into Brahman whence they have come forth."

Again, in verses 6 and 7 of the fourth Brahmana of Chapter IV of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, Rishi Yajnavalkya speaks of the supreme place of Brahman attained by the righteous and the return again to this earth of the man whose mind is attached to objects: But in verse 11, of the same Brahmana he says: "*There are indeed those unblest worlds covered by blind darkness. Men who are ignorant and not lightened go after death to those worlds.*" It is strange that the Rishi here gives no indication of the theory of transmigration. The good are declared to enter into the place of Brahman while the wicked go to the cheerless dark regions without passing through any other stages of existence.

According to some Rishis, the soul of the sinner goes to certain regions destined for sinners according to the degree of his sinfulness ; and when after having continually burnt there with the agonies of remorse for his tortuous deeds, his expiation is at an end, then he receives grace. Thereafter he attains to his appropriate sacred sphere by dint of such merit as he may have acquired on earth and enjoys his reward. According to the degree of wisdom, virtue and holiness, that he may acquire there, he will attain to higher spheres and travelling on that divine and holy path, will rise from one to another of countless heavens. In heaven, there is no animality, no hunger, no thirst ; there is no desire of woman or wealth, neither lust nor anger nor greed. There is eternal life, eternal youth. By the grace of God, the soul is infinitely progressive. Overcoming sin and sorrow, this progressive soul must and will progress onwards and upwards. From one heaven to another, the tides of wisdom, love, virtue and goodness carry that divine soul onwards towards everlasting progress and from his heart, the fount of joy perennially springs. It will not decline again on earth.

According to some other Rishis, heaven is not absorption into God's Divine Essence to the loss of our individuality which destroys all conditions of our advancement in ethical life and for our communion with Him. In the heaven which he has instituted for us, we behold a whole family of saints and prophets, our glorified dear ones who have preceded us, all united with each other and united in Him, enjoying the highest beatitude, where there is no consciousness except the soul's consciousness of Him. This state is not the soul's annihilation in Him but its complete occupation with Him to the exclusion of all other distractions. This condition involves no loss of consciousness but only the soul's expansion into cosmic consciousness, where it is still living but as an all-absorbed entity enjoying His bliss. All who

have faithfully toiled in His name here below, all who have loyally wrought His will in the strivings and struggles of this world are there with no infirmity, no decrepitude of age, no failings of the flesh, to mar the increasing life with its ever-expansive hope and ever-deepening joy. How inconceivably vast, how incalculably rich is that illimitable home, the eternal City, which admits them all as inmates and citizens ! All our masters are there assembled. Seated on smaller thrones, they surround the throne of His Great Spirit whose glory is in them and in whose glory they dwell. How this blessed confraternity of disembodied souls, *jeevan-muktas*, all shine in His Light, the light of the central sun and reflect His Glory. Celestial spirit forms, animated by the Supreme Spirit ! None lives apart ; none can live apart from Him. In Him, they live, move and have their being.

According to some eminent modern prototypes of the ancient Rishis, the soul which is manifested in the human body being non-material, will necessarily assume an appropriate spiritual form for its continued existence after death and have an abode where conditions of life help to work out the fruits of its merits and demerits and to complete the development begun on the earth. That surrounding of new circumstances we may call heaven or hell which is not therefore wholly inside us but outside also in the form of various conditions full of joy, sorrow, trial, tribulation, victory, according as we have deserved them. We oftentimes forget that every obstinate disease will have its bitter treatment as the process of cure. Hell and heaven there must be,—like wealth and poverty, like health and sickness, like darkness and light, like the inseparable contraries through which man's life must pass on towards its goal. Therefore, as a necessary environment, as a necessary corrective, as a discipline which cannot be avoided, there must be hell.

It shall be outside us, independent of us, ordained for us, and inevitably to be gone through in order that we may pass out to the conditions of blessedness. And similarly, there must be heaven also, outside us, independent of us, ordained for us—that the organism of our spirit may find an abode better adapted and more favourable than it met here to accomplish its destiny and that peace and progress may be united in the conscious love of God.

This ennobling idea of a future life in surroundings far more elevated, more blessed than here, though varying with the moral and spiritual advancement of the individual in this life, has been a homely delight and strength to millions in all generations. It has supported them in the time of temptations and trials. It has nerved the martyr for his endurance. Of the flames in which men have perished for their faith, it has made a hallow of enduring brightness. It has cheered and glorified the quiet and secluded death-bed of the humble and unobtrusive and made him say in resignation. "Father, not my will but Thine be done." The sufferings of purgatory and the tranquillities of paradise are equally intended by God, our Deliverer, to lead us deeper and higher into spiritual communion and inseparable relation with Himself. Belief in a permanent hell as a horrible place of everlasting torture, a blazing furnace of eternal brimstone and fire, a dreadful abode of interminable tormenting punishments inflicted by the God of Death and His ministers and agents, is, therefore, a flat moral contradiction. Real hell, has been, on the other hand, aptly described by a modern Rishi Venkata Ratnam as the hospital of God where Love is the Senior Physician and Mercy the Head Nurse.

The ancient Rishis assure us that absorption and ecstasy in the communion of God steadily cultivated will disarm death and give us insight into and experience of the nature

of immortal life. They further emphasise that if we keep our implicit trust in God, His loving kindness would reveal itself on our death-bed, that the darts of death would become inoffensive and that all sorrows of death would be taken away. They urge that we should prepare ourselves to depart from this world joyfully carried by His Hand, the Hand of our great Lord, our Merciful and Loving Father, that we should leave all our relations and friends and the riches of the world behind not with tears in our eyes but with joy in our hearts, that we should feel that we are going with Him into the mansions of righteousness and peace, where there is no weeping, no sighing, no sorrow, but where we shall enjoy eternal peace and happiness.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE PERCEPTION OF THE OPERATION OF GOD'S MORAL LAW BY THE RISHIS AND THEIR APOSTOLIC SUCCESSORS.

It will be clear from the foregoing chapters that man should not be viewed from a purely physical stand-point, should not be judged to be a sort of machine, subject, irrespective of choice and consent, to an unbending iron rule. He is primarily and mainly a *soul* through which is to be realised an Eternal and Benevolent Purpose. We must therefore appreciate that apart and different from the Physical Law whose rule the external world implicitly obeys, there is a higher Moral Law whose domain lies over the hearts and souls of men, and that conscious loyalty—intelligent adherence and not compelled obedience—is the true fulfilment of that Higher Moral Law. In other words, we should realise that there is an internal, as well as an external Kingdom of God; and that He controls the former by persuasion, as He sways the latter by command.

Again, physical science recognises one great and truly marvellous principle. That is called the principle of the Conservation of Energy. Energy can never be wasted, can never be diminished, can never be destroyed. It may assume diverse forms, it may be transmuted from one expression to another—at one time as a moving force, at another time as a glowing light and a third time as some other phenomenon. But eliminated it cannot be. To try to put an end to energy is to combat the very purpose of creation. It needs but brief reflection to perceive that there is a corresponding and, in a real sense, a sublimer principle, namely, the Conservation of Life. Life is by Heaven's warrant indestructible. Life can never—on no account be diminished or destroyed. And as we proceed step by step along the scale as life manifests itself in diverse organisms, through its several expressions of assimilation and integration, separation and multiplication, reproduction and perpetuation, and thus ascend higher and higher, we come to human life, where thinkers of different schools have observed, there emerges a principle of great moment, namely, the moral sense. We perceive that the old law of *conservation* prevails with the most certain and un-failing application to this moral life of man. This moral life of man can never fail—cannot be diminished, cannot be even resisted. It may appear to be retarded, hindered, diverted, forced back. But there is one great truth, one solemn lesson which history emphatically teaches on all hands, it is the lesson that the moral life of man must thrive, that the moral law must eventually prevail. It shall be my endeavour in this chapter to show how this Higher Moral Law was perceived and appreciated by the ancient Rishis and their apostolic successors.

The teachings of the Upanishads as regards the operation of God's moral law in the Universe and man's imperative duty of observance thereof are of a very high order, having regard to the stage of world's civilisation and the social con-

dition in which the people lived. The *Upanishads* aim at perfect harmony between profession and practice and a spiritual condition of the most perfect peace and happiness. To quote the words of Tattwabhusan—

“ They draw a sharp line of distinction between *preya*, the pleasant and *sreya*, the good, and even when the highest good is identified with the highest happiness, they never lose sight of the distinction between the pleasure derived from things worldly and ‘other-worldly’,—between things finite, wherever found,—and the happiness, which is the natural outcome of the highest wisdom,—of conscious union with the Infinite. A life of righteousness, at any rate, of earnest striving after righteousness, is in reality the very first condition of admission into the circle of Vedantic enquirers, and a life of perfect love and holiness is, again, the test of the attainment of true wisdom. When one is conscious of the ultimate unity of souls, indifference, hatred, unholy thoughts and actions, become, according to the *Upanishads*, absolutely impossible. A number of enigmatical expressions in them, *apparently*, teaching the equivalence of virtue and vice, have led certain recent writers on the *Upanishads* to charge them with an one-sided intellectualism and a dangerous moral antinomianism. This is due partly to the unguarded nature of those expressions, but mainly to an utter misunderstanding of the standpoint from which their authors speak. The very fact that a life of inward and outward holiness was an indispensable condition of entrance into the privileges of Vedantic discipleship, and that the life in Brahman is everywhere described as a life of perfect love and holiness, ought to convince every unbiassed student of these writings that the expressions in question bear a different import from what is suggested by their literal interpretation. The fact seems to be that the passages in question give imperfect utterance to the truth that evil is only relative and evanescent, and that, to the All-Wise and All-Good, even what seems to be the greatest evil is a means to the highest good, and that, further from the point of view of the Eternal One, who is above all change and struggle, even striving after the good—the very struggle between good and evil, is relatively false, for the highest good is eternally realised in Him and, therefore, in all who see their unity in Him. It should also be remembered that by ‘good’ and ‘evil’, the *Upanishads* often mean the pleasurable and painful results, here and hereafter, of interested actions, and both these they teach us to avoid, so that the soul may be freed from all selfish desires and motives, and the most perfect inward holiness attained.”

The Rishis assert that moral principles must be based on attachment to and love for God. The consciousness of God, especially of God's friendliness and love, makes man a different being. He finds that he is a living soul, face to face, with His Maker who is no less his loving Father; his body not despised becomes only his earthly house and all his faculties become the consecrated instruments of obedience to His Holy Will. He feels that he is an athlete in the moral and spiritual arena, the hero of a hundred fights in the dark places of the soul, where only God's eye can see and cast His unfailing radiance and His smile give the courage that ends in triumph. The love for God makes the animal into the man, raising the whole sphere of his life, energy and aims above the trinkets and amusements of the world, lifting him to realise the imperishable treasures of a God-begotten soul and a God-given life.

It now seems necessary to explain what the sages of the Upanishads really meant by evil or sin and why the God of Love and Wisdom has designed man to be a strange combination of the lowest animal passions and the loftiest spiritual promptings and why He allows and tolerates the existence of so-called evil side by side with good in this world and why, as the Omnipotent, He has not prevented and does not prevent its entry therein.

The composite nature of the human personality seems at first sight incomprehensible. For, it is, on the one hand, gross, carnal and earthly, the fountain-head of vile passions, ever grovelling in creature comforts; on the other, it is holy, spiritual and heavenly, the sanctuary of the soul that has originated from God. As a product of nature, born to take a place and pass away among the organisms of this earth, man is a creature no less than the cattle on a thousand hills and God is his Maker. As a vehicle of something above nature, as lifted into the freedom of personal existence, as sharing in the life of His

Eternal Spirit, He is a son of divine lineage and God is His Father. Man, verily, is, as the poet describes him, a worm, a god. "O Man," says the Persian Sufi, "Thou coin bearing the double stamp of the body and spirit! I do not know what thy nature is; for, thou art the mixture higher than heaven and lower than earth. Do not be cast down, because thou art the mixture of the four elements; do not be self-complacent, because thou art the mirror of the seven realms."

We know the body is endowed with a great variety of faculties designed for its preservation, its usefulness and its reproduction. These it shares with all animal life. We know also that the spirit which dwells in the body is endowed likewise with various faculties, among which the most important are the mind, the conscience, and the affections, any one of which clearly shows the rightful supremacy of the soul over the body. The soul in every one of us knows that it ought to be the master and absolute lord over the body; the mind to preserve it, guide it and use it in a reasonable manner, the conscience to regulate its desires, to grant liberty for physical indulgence and gratification, or to withhold it, to discern between a virtuous and vicious mode of exercising its faculties. And above all, the soul is endowed with love to make the human being friendly and brotherly towards all the rest, to make every duty a delight and to throw over the whole life a halo of sweetness and joyful beauty. It will therefore be seen that the strange combination in the body of the lowest animal passions and the loftiest spiritual promptings, as stated above, of the lusts of the flesh and the divine instincts of the soul, has been purposely designed by God for the evolution of the moral good, character, righteousness and love of a self-conscious and free-willed being such as man—one who has been endowed with the full freedom of choice between right and wrong under the guidance of reason. The freedom which He has given and the little gleam of moral light which came with it, are manifestly

designed to raise man from a lower state to a higher, from the brutal into the human and from the human into the divine.

When, however, the carnal nature asserts itself and the vile passions arise with all their demoniac fury and frenzy, our individual self, notwithstanding its continued watchfulness and struggle, moral and spiritual warfare, armed with the highest philosophical and ethical knowledge, feels absolutely impotent to quell them, unaided by His divine strength and without the fire of enthusiasm kindled in our hearts by His Divine Spirit. But, when His Holy Spirit mercifully reinforces our sinking heart with an influx of divine enthusiasm, the rising surges of unruly passion subside as if under magic power. Only passion can vanquish passion and a most formidable and unconquerable passion is enthusiasm. When it rushes with full force into our soul, all carnal passions readily ebb away. Lust and anger, covetousness and pride, envy and malice, doubt and despair, weakness and inconstancy, hypocrisy and worldliness, the sin of corruption, the sin of injustice, the sin of prejudice, the sin of slander, the sin of hard-heartedness, the sin of apathy, the sin of spiritual pride, of moral pharisaicalness, of intellectual superiority, in fact all the sins of the mind, the heart and the will retire from the enthusiastic soul and dare not encroach upon what is consecrated to Him and protected by His Almighty Arm.

In looking abroad on the evil prevailing in the world, we find that the whole of it arises mostly through the misuse of our freedom of will, through our action in direct disobedience to moral laws. Having endowed man the gift of free-will to be exercised as he chooses, the Supreme Being also places the whole machinery of the physical and moral world at his disposal and allows him to bend His forces to his (man's) wicked will. In the ceaseless war between Him and man, He, the Eternal, often surrenders all that belongs to Him; He submits, truth is subdued, good is returned

with evil. The genius of wickedness and self-interest has indeed sometimes achieved almost impossible purposes ; but its victory only lasted a little while ; yes, but only for a time that in the end, the Divine may shine all the more gloriously and wickedness may voluntarily return the price of blood at a fall dead headlong in self-reproach. See sec. ii of chap. of Chandogya Upanishad which relates the parable of the contention of the *Devas* and *Asuras* for supremacy. God's plan of evolution of growing good men instead of *manufacturing* them like machines demanded not only the freedom essential to virtue, but such exercise of it as would involve experience of all kinds of errors and their consequences. In other words, we had to learn how to use our liberty arising by the preliminary process of making mistakes and then finding them out to be mistakes which were to be avoided in future. We had to be educated to the personal efficacy of thinking for ourselves, that we might form right judgments and thus create right moral codes. This could not be done, unless by a miracle, in any other way than by experience. Experience has been the ever-present and necessary agent by which anything could be learnt at all. If, therefore, experience was absolutely necessary, and if the history of man proves that by experience of evil, even in its worst forms, the general character and conduct have been ultimately raised, and is ever tending to higher and higher standards, we are bound to conclude that God is justified by the event ; and that when He gave us that liberty which in its first exercise led us into the experience of evil, He did no wrong, but only good ; because good and the highest and most enduring good would in the long run result from it.

To achieve this end and in the furtherance of His benign and holy purpose, God has so ordered the conditions of human life that good shall be sure in the end to overcome evil and righteousness shall blot out sin, that divinity shall triumph over carnality.

the spirit over the flesh. He has so designed the economy of our life that human character is never found to enter into its glory except through the ordeal of affliction; that its force cannot come forth without the offer of resistance; nor can the grandeur of its free-will declare itself except in the battle of fierce temptations, or except when the accidents of birth, breeding or station, when the tyrannies of heredity or the necessities of circumstance are shaken off in the stress of some great responsibility or in the storm of some resistless impulse. Thus, belauded hypocrites under the fear of death or the despair of downfall or the fever of self-interest have cast off their vain trappings to show the absolute meanness of their make. On the other hand, a Swiss mountaineer or the consumptive daughter of a light-house keeper achieves immortality by the innate heroism of the soul. In God's government of the universe, moral evil is therefore the only condition in which the highest, the most sublime virtue ever seen among men is possible. The existence of moral evil does, however, in no way tell against His Omnipotence—His power to prevent evil prevailing in the world as will be seen hereunder.

As there can be no virtue or moral good without freedom of choice and as moral good consists in right choosing and choosing itself implies two courses to choose between, we are not denying God's Omnipotence in any real sense, if we say that He could not both provide for moral goodness in the world and shut out all evil from it. We do not deny His power to have made us mere machines or sentient animals of the lower order, incapable of swerving from His laws; but then such machines or brute animals would have had not the least moral value, not having any moral quality, neither good nor bad—but outside the pale of virtue, because absolutely irresponsible. But the goodness in man which He has been developing is a goodness which has an infinitely higher quality than mere *correctness* of action. It is a

spontaneous preference for goodness in the presence of *choice* between good and evil. In order to make such goodness possible at all for us, it was necessary that we should have limited amount of freedom, that we should be placed in conditions where good and evil are alike possible; where the eternal distinction between the two can be discerned and continually recognised, where the most bitter experience can teach us the malignant nature of all kinds of sin and where blissful experience can teach us the benignity and priceless value of all kinds of obedience to His moral law. The evolution of moral good being then His supreme purpose with man, even He, the Omnipotent All-in-All, has to leave open the door to what is called sin, the greatest of evils, seeing that He endowed man the sublimest of gifts, the gift of free will.

From a careful scrutiny of the teachings of the Upanishads I am led to infer that the sages do not seem to recognise the existence of evil or sin as an independent element in God's moral economy, as one having a substance of its own, but seem to regard it only as something which is not natural but unnatural, not primary and original but secondary and derivative, as something which is the defect, excess, corruption or perversion of that which has substance, even as darkness is nothing but the disappearance of light. In other words, evil or sin consists in living in opposition to the law of moral faithfulness which our sense is obliged to admit, if not to follow. There is in us the law of animal life, the law of worldly social life, and the law of spiritual life, rising one above another,—oftentimes, the higher merging in the lower, sometimes, the lower merging in the higher. There is no necessary antagonism in them; the antagonism is our own making. We make it when we wilfully violate the higher for the sake of gratifying the lower. This is sin; and we are its authors and not God. It is the result

what was given for our glory, namely, our free-will having been turned to our shame to serve our own lusts.

Let it be clearly understood that not one of all our human faculties is necessarily or absolutely vicious. Every one of them is designed for a good and useful purpose and can be so used if kept under the control of our free-will. These are all the faculties which are necessary for self-preservation, for the acquisition of wealth and all forms of comfort, luxury and temporal good, for the upholding of our own individual rights and last but not least, the faculties given to us for reproduction. The life of the body, in the fullest sense of that term, cannot be sustained without each and all of these faculties; and in the discharge of our duty to our bodies and in the maintenance of those conditions in which bodily welfare consists, there are elements which may lead to vice and certainly will, if not properly controlled by our free-will, for which we alone are responsible and not God.

It is therefore consistent with His perfect justice and equity, no less than with His Divine Mercy and Love to allow the utmost limits of freedom to do good or to choose evil, without which no soul can take the first step in virtue, much less can ever rise unto the holiness and bliss for which, He, in His love, has designed it. The fulfilment of the mission of our life, therefore, consists in employing our glorious free-will in an increasing measure in drawing our inclinations into line with His purposes, realising that "our wills are ours to make *them* *His* and declaring in the oft-repeated words of Maharishi Sri Venkataramana of Tiruvanamalai: "*Lord, I have no will of my own; Thy Will is my will.*"

We should also note that the lower or animal nature of man which is supposed to be the seat of all sin and carnality is neither *per se*, moral nor immoral, but simply unmoral, having purely animal wants and desires. What is needed

to attain holiness is not to crush this lower nature but to govern and keep it under control with the free-will which God has vouchsafed us. Then we shall be able to understand the spirit of the truth of what Lord Sri Krishna has said in the Bhagavad Gita : "*The Self is the friend of the self of him in whom, the self by the Self is vanquished ; but full of enmity to the unsubdued self, the Self verily turneth into an enemy.*" In plain language, self-conquest signifies the disciplining of the enemy-self into the friend-self, i.e. in the subjugation of the lower animal demands of the self to the higher human dictates of the self. The high-souled men are they who daily illustrate the sublime paradox '*What is kept is lost ; what is given is gained.*' Speaking of the marvel that the human heart attains fulness through self-spending, Newman uttered the profound truths : "*When we serve, we rule, when we give we have ; when we surrender ourselves, we are victors.*" As Bacon suggests, man lies mid-way between God and beast and the whole value of human life may be summed up as the ascent from beast to God. Buddha begging with the bhikshu bowl in the streets of his own capital, Jesus praying from the bitter cross for his crucifiers, they are the world's noblest examples of self-conquest. Let the pure soul be intent on the heavenly pilgrimage, observes Saadi, diadem or dust make little difference.

By far the noblest characteristic that has emerged from man's free will as a necessary concomitant of his nature is his moral sense or moral order, more beautiful than anything that art can show, more imperative in its inexorableness than any law of nature—the order or sense of duty. This moral sense is the so-called "*forbidden fruit*" which in the history of man's evolution brought forth the knowledge of good and evil. It is the high prerogative of man to perceive distinctions of right and wrong, of the fit and the unfit, of good and evil, unseen by any creature except himself, unseen by him through any organ of sense, revealed only to that marvellous

inner eye—the conscience. The right thus seen he feels bound to obey though he has to go through fire and torture to do it.

We have already seen that among the products in the universe, man is the noblest by reason of his intellect alone. But we also find that he has something else, which, in his own estimation, he reckons nobler still than intellect, viz., conscience and this faculty is in its normal exercise the greatest of all the blessings which man possesses. The object or purpose of the conscience is to secure the welfare of all mankind through the free action of each individual. It is an entirely beneficent gift designed to promote goodness and happiness through goodness. I therefore feel it necessary to deal a little more in detail with the evolution of this most important constituent in the human being.

In the evolution of the world as we know it in this planet, there has been a constant struggle for existence and survival among all the species of organic life, both vegetable and animal. In the course of that struggle, two features are conspicuous. In one, violence, self-interest, ruthless rapine and destruction; in the other, a gradual but constant improvement in species, a survival of the fittest, most conspicuous in the production of the human race, which is pre-eminently the supreme being on earth and irresistibly dominant over all other living creatures. Man is partly distinguished from them, by superior intelligence, and by the power inherent in that higher intelligence—of controlling and using many of the higher creatures and nearly all the resources of nature. As a rational animal, he is supreme, although it should be admitted that, in some respects, he cannot rival the instinctive power and skill of many small creatures, such as bees and ants. Even in the sphere of intellect, he is on common ground with a few of the domestic animals, such as the elephant, the horse and the dog. That is to say, man's intellect is similar in kind to the inferior intellect of such animals, though

infinitesimally richer, vaster and more versatile. If we want to differentiate man, we must look elsewhere, and we find it immediately in the fact that he is a moral being; that he possesses the moral sense or conscience, as it is called, the faculty by which he discerns that there is a difference between right and wrong; that some thoughts, words and deeds are right, and others wrong; that he is compelled by that moral sense to feel: "I ought to do and to be what is right; I ought not to do or to be what is wrong". Moreover—this is a very important point—conscience binds us to do right for its own sake without any regard to personal consequences, either pleasant or unpleasant, without any hope for reward, without any fear of punishment for disobedience. In like manner, conscience binds us not to do wrong, because wrong is evil and wicked in itself and not because we may suffer for it.

Man is, then, a moral being, one who feels an inward obligation to do what he thinks or knows to be right, and not to do what he thinks and knows to be wrong; and in consequence of that privilege, his whole life and aim, as an animal, has been altered by it. Had he been left without any moral sense, never would he have dreamed of acting otherwise than according to the dictates of his appetites and passions. He might, and he certainly would have become the most vicious and brutal of all the creatures, but he would never have known that it was wrong to be vicious and brutal. There would have been no possible perception that anything was amiss; no matter how awful his condition and his actions, he would have been neither moral nor immoral, but only unmoral, as unmoral as a stone or a steam engine. Sin would have been impossible.

A new-born babe is neither moral or immoral, but unmoral, destitute of any moral sense or power of discernment between right and wrong. "Innocent as a new-born babe" is a common proverb which is strictly true. In this purely

animal stage, the child is governed and guided by its desires and wants and fears. For a period, varying of course with different children, generally, four or five years after its birth, its conduct and activities are controlled chiefly, if not exclusively by rewards and punishments. If it be obedient to rules imposed upon it, it is rewarded by gifts or praises. If it be disobedient, it is punished by some penalties or blame. For the sake of reward or through fear of punishment, its conduct becomes more or less regulated, and the child thereby acquires some good habits and the correction of some faults, both processes being absolutely needful for its own safety and happiness. But in all this there is not a grain of true morality, nor in any transgression even a trace of sin or guilt. The child is still only an animal under the impulses of motives purely selfish. But because it is the child of human parents, and therefore destined to grow up to be a human being, the day comes at last when the moral sense begins to dawn and the conscience is a new faculty, hitherto entirely unfelt and unknown. The child commits some act of disobedience, and, instead of being only afraid of punishment, as it used to be, is smitten with shame and self-reproach. For the first time, it understands what right and wrong mean ; what is meant by " I ought " and " I ought not "—quite apart from consequences pleasant or unpleasant. Before its wrong act is detected, before a breath of blame has been heard, the little frame trembles, the eyes are downcast, the face is sad and the cheeks burn with a strange and painful emotion. In that first moment of guilt and shame, the child is born again, born into a new and higher world of thought and feeling, of hope and fear. It has become a moral being, and now it can understand what its mother means when she says it is wrong to lie or to steal, or to do what is forbidden.

It will be seen from the foregoing that the first germs of conscience are in the infant bosom, pregnant with possibilities of growth under the pure atmosphere

of a pious home and the genial light of a godly instruction. Nor has history been barren of striking examples of the working of conscience in children. The leader of the theistic thought in America, Theodore Parker, was but four years of age, when returning home from a church of which his father was the minister, he saw a little tortoise peeping out from the water in an adjoining tank. He lifts up his stick, to beat the tiny creature; but he hears a voice of warning and remonstrance, his infant hand is suddenly arrested, he turns round to see whence the sound has proceeded. But finding no human being within ken, he runs home and narrates the whole incident to his mother. The worthy lady takes the boy in her loving arms and says feelingly, with tears trickling down her face, "*That voice that you have heard some men call conscience, but I prefer to call it the Voice of God in the soul of man. If you listen to it and obey it, it will speak clearer and clearer, and always guides you right; but if you turn a deaf ear and disobey, then it will fade out little by little and leave you all in the dark. Your life depends on your heeding this little voice.*"

Men often try to hush and get rid of this little voice, this moral sense and they can weaken and dilute it, but they can never kill it. When it seems most dead, suddenly it will flash out in some moment of crisis with awful power. The moral sense under the guidance of reason declares, as already stated above, that certain kinds of conduct are more worthy or more unworthy than others, discerns and proclaims a distinction of transcendent importance between them, which distinction is marked by the words *right* and *wrong*. This perception that one course of conduct is noble and the other base, that the one is to be approved and praised, the other to be disapproved, and blamed, the sense of peace in ourselves at the one and of shame in ourselves at the other—this moral sense which we all have but cannot explain, is part of the original make of man's nature, of our own self. This moral

sense corresponds to or is rather included in what in the *vedanta* is called "*the Vijnanamaya kosa*," the conceptional sheath, one of the five *kosas* or sheaths in which man's individuality is encased.

I shall illustrate the marvellous operation of this moral sense by a reference to Edwin Long's picture of the Maiden of Ephesus who was called on to offer incense on Diana's altar. The maiden being a Christian, the offering of incense on a pagan god's altar was to her an idolatrous and sacrilegious act. Refusal to go through this rite would cost her life. Her lover, with burning eyes, urges compliance. Judge and executioners look sternly on. But the delicate white hand is withheld. Loyalty to Christ and Truth prevails. And we know that on the following day the damsel will be thrust on to the arena where the panther or the tiger will lap her blood. What is the emotion which stirs us? Not only appreciation of the artist's art or even of the lovely light in the maiden's face; but, above and beyond all that, a bounding sense of nobility, of worth, of worthiness, in that fair Christian's loyalty. We are carried out of ourselves with a sense that here is something which we must honour—which we do honour and cannot but honour, even though it would be hard to show that, apart from the intrinsic nobility of her protest, any one would have been one penny the worse for her dropping a pinch of the fragrant incense on the shrine.

But now again we are passing down a Madras slum. We hear a bitter cry. And turning our heads, we see a huge brute with giant strength thrashing a woman or a little child, his unrestrained passion at every blow endangering life. What is the emotion which surges up? Not only pity for the victim; not only an impulse to intervene; but, above and beyond these, a sense that here is something that is unutterably base. We are carried out of ourselves with a sense that this is something which we must execrate, which we do execrate and cannot but execrate, while any power of feeling is in our

hearts. 'Nobility' and 'baseness': these are qualities which we quite instinctively recognise. 'Honour' and 'execration'; these are feelings which are spontaneously generated in our hearts.

That is about as far as we can get in analysing what our moral sense impresses on us with regard to the conduct of other people. If we wish to have a yet clearer insight into the pronouncements of our moral sense, we must note what emotions it wakens in us concerning the conduct not of others but of ourselves.

Suppose that I have received great kindness from a friend. He took me to his house when I was homeless, guided me, sympathised with me, helped me when I was desolate, started me in life, and ever since with brotherly interest has watched over my career. In the confidence of our friendship he tells me a secret of his circumstances, not in itself in any way dishonourable, but such that his prosperity depends on the confidence being sacredly kept. But I know that his rival and competitor will give me a hundred rupees for the secret, and I forthwith go and sell it to him and receive the cash. A year afterwards my friend dies, a ruined and broken-hearted man through my betrayal. I meanwhile have greatly prospered. My hundred rupees have become five thousand rupees. But the night after hearing of his death I lie sleepless on my bed, and my conduct all rises up before me vivid in every detail. And the moment that is so, an intense self-aborrence, an almost unbearable shame seizes on me. I judge myself with a poignancy and an unsparing justice more acute than I have ever judged others with. I try to frame excuses to myself. But they wither and shrivel before I can shape them in thought. I know, without any reasoning whatsoever, that I have been a sneak and a traitor. I do not argue with myself. I cannot. The knowledge overwhelms me. Shame and confusion of face

are mine. And it is vain for me to attempt to console myself with the thought that no eye sees me; and that the only man who knew of my treachery is dead. I execrated the conduct of that other man who thrashed his child. But I felt no shame. This shame, this remorse, this agony of conscience is a feeling wholly different from abhorrence of another man's wickedness.

It is in this conscience or moral law in man that God incarnates Himself. We have already seen that there is an inspiration of right conduct in every man, an insight into what is good and what is bad in the principles of character, the source of which is in the Spirit-Presence within. The two overwhelming evidences that God exists are the creation without and the moral law within. We have seen that creation means God's self-embodiment in outward nature, and the moral law means the same incarnation within us. The vague dreads and undeniable consolations of conscience have their reference to something *other* than ourselves, to the ever-watchful witness of *One* from whom, we suspect in spite of ourselves, nothing can be hidden. His presence stirs from within, and we tremble and become pale before its stern reality. A voice comes to us from above, from below, from all sides, yet we do not know from where, which decides not only the merit of our acts, but also the worth of our feelings and motives, and every part of our conduct. And very strange indeed it is that, though the voice is within ourselves, we have not the power of saying "Nay" to its decisions.

This moral sense or the conscience has been aptly described by Brahmananda Keshub Chunder Sen as "*a person within the person, a tongue within the tongue*, who talk in different voices which can be distinguished by the trained ear; as a '*Thou*' within the '*I*', both being distinct from each other. This mysterious second person that resides in the '*I*' is, I repeat, the direct manifestation of God's Perfect

Being, His Divine Voice, our Higher Self, a Self other than our own, the Evangel which He is revealing in each soul, the Oracle which He has set up in each bosom to perform certain sacred functions in His Divine Government.

It is the conscience, that on our acting against its dictates engenders in us a feeling of personal anguish of an over-whelming sense of unworthiness for having rebelled against God, for having broken an obligation, and for having risen in insurrection against His authority. It is the conscience that on our disregarding its mandates haunts us with a tormenting sense of a tearful, broken-hearted sorrow, such as crushes us on hurting a mother. It is the conscience, that ruthless critic, that never gives man rest one single moment, but accuses, hurts, exposes, ever the angel of vengeance who searches every hiding place and points to every spot of guilt and like a dreadful demogorgon pursues him at all times and in all places, deprives him of peace by day and rest by night and leaves him at last a fool and a wretch—at once an object of pity and a victim of scorn.

Such is the terrific and most peculiar force of the moral sense when we have done evil. But suppose that, instead of that, I have done well. In great temptation, and to the loss, not only of wealth, but of dear friends and of that repute among men which seems the very jewel of life, I have done the difficult, painful right. What is my emotion then? Great sorrow at my grievous losses; perhaps even some passing wave of bitterness at the injustice of men; but, deeper down than that, a wonderful satisfaction and peace, a sense of harmony with what is highest and best and most enduring and most inwrought into the eternal framework of things. The suffering and sorrow are great. But I would not undo my conduct if I could. I am so far satisfied with myself and my satisfaction is absolutely consistent with the truest modesty and the deepest humility. In other words,

on doing what we consider to be right, we enjoy the same many serenity of mind, the same soothing, satisfactory delight, which follows on our receiving praise from a father, is because we have within us the Image of God to whom our love and veneration look, in whose smile we find our happiness, for whom we yearn, towards whom we direct our pleadings, in whose anger we are troubled and waste away.

Incidentally, it may be stated that the moral sense deals with a peculiar province of its own which can never be translated into any other province, any more than sight can ever be translated into terms of hearing, or smell into terms of touch. If a man had no ears, you could never give him a glimmering of the meaning of the word 'shrill' by painting pictures for him. If a man had no nostrils, you could never give him a glimmering of the meaning of the word 'fragrance' by making him feel the soft petals of the rose. And if a man had no moral sense, (but fortunately it exists in every man) I hold that, in like manner you could never give him a glimmering of the meaning of the words 'right' and 'wrong,' 'noble' and 'base' by any talk addressed to his reason or his taste or any other of the faculties which he might possess. See Chandogya-V-I. The parable of the senses.

While the unbridled indulgence of our physical instincts would lead us to the grossest animalism and bestiality without any perception of their baseness, our conscience, when duly enlightened by reason, which latter establishes our affinity with the Divine Mind, is the chief faculty of our being which rescues us from the degradation and actually alters the whole natural course and tendency of our life. It condemns as unworthy all motives of action, the core and kernel of which is selfishness. It is the conscience, the immortal witness of God, that shows us, as our divine eye, His Face wherever righteousness is manifested in the world outside and whenever our soul makes an endeavour to be righteous. We recognise

it as the Voice of His Spirit which governs always and everywhere, the Voice of the Everlasting God.

In passing, I may here state that the first sin known and felt to be sin and followed by shame and the rebuke of conscience, was no 'fall' of man as popularly supposed, but a necessary curve of the spiral of progress, the dawn of a brighter day, a step upwards from the unconscious abyss of sheer brutalism into the at first painful but purer and afterwards blissful air of a higher life. The first sin is the first step to virtue. We begin our flight by knowing ourselves to be sinners to rise at length into the rapture of saints. God has done us no wrong, then, in leading us into this world of so-called sin and shame. No language could describe the wrong He would have done us had He kept back from us the light of conscience, and left us in the outer darkness of undisturbed animalism and brutality. We discern His purpose in the manner in which He has arraigned our free-will against moral evil, because in no other way than by our experience of and contact with moral evil could we ever become good like Him, good from choice and not from any mechanical inability to do wrong, and after deliberate determination to prefer good to evil. He has doubtless reckoned upon the wildest, most lawless and licentious exercise of that free-will, which it was absolutely necessary to confer, if mankind were ever to become good at all. His non-interference to interrupt by miracle the action of His stern but beneficent law is a pledge to us that the law is good, that our freedom of choice between good and evil is both wise and righteous and that it can only work out in one way—in the highest and ever-lasting goodness of all His children.

As a correlative to this moral sense, say the Rishis, "*God who is the light of knowledge has instituted the law of righteousness for the sake of supremely pure peace*" and has ordained our own moral sense to conduct us to the recognition of

His moral law which is as universal in space and time as the physical laws of gravity or the refraction of light. Just as when the scientific explorer unearthing the antiquities of Egypt or Assyria discovers some tablet inscribed with laws, wise and just also, he not only infers that some one carved the sentences upon the stone, but also that they came from the mind and the heart of some one, a wise and just king, minister or councillor; similarly, our moral sense proceeds from the observation of the moral law to the induction of a moral Law-Giver, a Holy Ruler. "The rule of right" says Dr. Martineau, "the symmetries of character are no provincialism of this planet; they are known among the stars; they reign beyond Orion and the Southern Cross; they are wherever the Universal Spirit is; and no subject mind, though it fly in one track for ever, can escape beyond their bounds." We see the operation of this law not in man alone but in the whole world. It is not something external to, something that is located outside the universe, to be from time to time, promulgated and enjoined. The moral principle evidences the potent moral force, the profound moral purpose which has been infused into the very constitution of the universe. This world with its order is unthinkable to the physical scientist except on the basis of law. Likewise, this world with its moral values and moral judgments is unthinkable to the student of moral science except on the basis of moral purpose being embodied into the very fabric of the universe. The uniform trend, the invariable tendency, the irresistible impetus of the whole universe is towards moral perfection.

At the same time, we should also remember that just as our arm becomes palsied if we do not use it, just as our eyes grow blind if we live in darkness, just as our reason will be impaired and at length becomes useless if we do not exercise it by study and thought and just as our love will shrink and wither if we do not cultivate our affections, so will our conscience or moral sense grow torpid and dumb unless we keep it alive and

sensitive within us by taking good and timely heed of its demands. Knowledge expands and elevates conscience. Superstition corrupts and debases it. Conscience lives and grows upon the care with which it is cultivated and the obedience with which its mandates are carried out. Every time its angelic voice is heard and abided by, man gains in strength and fitness for the march of life; every time it is slighted, man is sapped of his energy and faints by the wayside and gradually sinks to the level of the brute from which he had risen.

Further, as a moral being, man knows almost without being taught that motives determine the moral quality of every action; that it is wrong to do a good action from a bad motive; and that sometimes, though very seldom, it is right to do a bad action with a good motive; for instance, to tell a lie to frustrate the purpose of a criminal or to mislead a murderous lunatic. Sometimes, the life of a person dangerously ill can only be saved by deceiving him. It is, without question, an essential element in morality to act with a good purpose, *viz.*, the purpose of promoting true welfare. Now it is natural and inevitable to ascribe this moral sense in man to God who is his Maker. For, one of the most obvious facts of human nature is that the conscience or the sense of duty recognises God as the source of its imperious authority. It is part of our very nature to feel when we do right, (*i.e.*, what we believe to be right) that we are obeying God; and likewise when we do wrong (thinking it to be wrong), we are disobeying and displeasing God.

Let it be clearly understood that conscience is only the impulse, the imperious mandate within, which says we ought to do what we know or think to be right. Conscience does not tell us what is right and what is wrong. This we have to learn by other faculties such as Reason and Love. When once we are convinced that such and such an action is right, then the voice of conscience is heard saying "Thou shalt do it ;

thou must do it ; thou art bound to do it ; utterly regardless of all consequences and at all cost." If my conscience sanctions what another man's conscience would condemn, that only shows that there is a moral difference of opinion in our respective minds, not that his conscience is more loyal to what is right than my conscience, nor mine more loyal than his. It will be seen therefore that there is and can be no moral evil at all without the moral sense and that what we rightly call " sin " would never have been perceived to be sin, would never have roused the least opposition or a single effort at self-control unless we had a moral sense. No matter how dreadful the act committed, it has no moral quality at all unless the person committing it knows that he is doing wrong. No moral blame can possibly attach to a person who did not fully know at the time that he was doing wrong.

It may also be added that the moral sense, the conscience, which leads up to the development of morals, is, as already stated above, part of the original make-up of man's nature. We find it wherever we find humanity. The knowledge of morals was not for the first time revealed through Moses on Mount Sinai, or Buddha under the Bodhi tree, or Confucius on the Yaungtse, or Plato in the groves of the academy ; nor was it first made known by Christ on the shores of the lake of Galilee. It pre-existed; the injunctions of Christ have been traced to more ancient writers, by whom they were recognised and taught to different nations. The Arabs knew what virtue and vice were before the appearance of their Prophet. It has been justly said that the Roman Lucretia, though she worshipped Venus, yet died for chastity, the noblest act of virtue. The savage mother boasts that her son never uttered a falsehood. In the remotest ages, in the darkest regions, we find there is a perception of the true and the good, prior to all other things, acknowledged as something superior to all calculations, recognised promptly and in which heart responds to heart all the world over.

I may also state that in God's Government, sin is sooner or later self-destructive, while virtue is reproductive of good ; the force of moral evil is self-consuming, self-exhausting and self-punishing, while the force of moral good is self-increasing, self-sustaining and self-rewarding and the spiritual side becomes gradually developed in Reason, Conscience and Love. All submission, all surrender, all sacrifice, all renunciation made in the name of God will surely conquer in the end. Thus ultimately, we see no real evil in the animal side of our nature but a happy harmony in which the animal and spiritual sides blend as parts of an undivided whole, He, the Supreme Being, being recognised as the common source of both. We therefore see why our deepest selves should always yearn for His Holiness, why this world of trial, sorrow and sin exists in His universe, the universe of a beneficent Being. We see also how the very end of creation itself is the perfecting of souls, the training of the finite moral free agent into the free choice of virtue, the bringing up of man to His likeness and His Holiness and not for earthly happiness.

Viewed in this light, the world becomes a beautiful and holy world ; a world in which if only we carry up our doubts and difficulties high enough and contemplate them in the pure light of the shining presence of God, they vanish and are gone ; a world in which with high and happy hope, with deep and undoubting faith, with full-orbed, self-forgetful love we have to put our hand in God's and go whithersoever He leads the way.

In illustration of this truth—that to one whose trust in God is firmly rooted, all is good in this world and nothing evil, I quote below an episode from the life of the American sage Emerson as narrated by Brahmā Rishi Venkata Ratnam to his pupils :—

“ Several of you have, of course, an idea of the genius of Emerson, that God-illuminated soul who could, within the brief compass of a short poem, present the real essence of

man's trust in God and man's deepest religious experiences. If, for instance, we read his short poem to which, for a Westerner he gives the surprising title of *Brahma* and ponder the truths it states, then, with no exaggeration we may say that a thoughtful reader can discover in it the distilled spirit of the Vedanta doctrine, and that to the West, with its scientific pursuits and humane pre-occupations, he therein disclosed the sublime verities of the deep mysticism of the East. From this stand-point, it has been reported of him, that, during his English tour, some of his friends who found him, as they thought, incurably and unreasoningly optimistic, since he always persisted in the profession that all is good in this world, took him to Newgate Prison, filled with hundreds of criminals of all varieties, guilty of all kinds of degrading doings, and enquired, 'What do you say now? Is this a good world?' And with that deep-founded, rock-based faith of his, Emerson answers 'Yes; the world is yet good.' The thought in his mind was akin to the noteworthy observation of another great thinker that every jail, correctly understood, humanely used and prayerfully administered, is verily a hospital for the sick soul. It is not the stone walls that indicate the purpose of a jail. The faith which, rather, is the background of a jail, is that as the criminal, wisely handled and sympathetically directed, undergoes the ordeal of imprisonment, his soul will also progress through the purgatory of penitence into the paradise of a reclaimed child of God. It was this faith that helped Emerson to see nothing dismal in the spectacle before him and to declare confidently that, not merely in spite of the jail, but even because of it, the world is, indeed a good world—a God-fashioned and God-governed world."

According to the Rishis, morality is the very essence of spiritual life. The hidden root, the secret spring of morality is religion. The two run so close into each other that, if separated, each by itself is useless or aimless. Without

morality, religion is bare hypocrisy or hollow superstition. But what is the sum and substance of morality? The acknowledged golden rule—"To love Thy neighbour as Thyself," "to cherish all creatures as thine own person," has in all ages been applauded as the highest law. Self-love is an instinct, a deep-seated natural prompting in every bosom. Imprinted in every thought and ruling one's feelings and actions, this instinct is the source of all offence—of all injustice and inhumanity—in the world. It runs through every human concern, it is the motive power of all human movements. With their incommensurable wisdom, therefore, our ancestors, who were deep read in all the secrets of human nature, its prejudices and predilections—summed up the essence of all morality in that one golden rule which has ever challenged the just admiration of a civilised world.

But after all, this love of one's neighbour as one's self does not appear to be the highest law. The acme of true morality is loftier than a just recognition of the world's equality to one's own self. In fact, with the growth and refinement of man's moral nature, the love of self sinks and ultimately disappears. The patriot that bleeds in the country's cause; the philanthropist that by his dumb eloquence and silent self-sacrifice pleads the cause of his very murderers; the doctor that throws himself into pestilence and even sucks up poison to snatch a precious life from the sharp scythe of the "grim old king"; the mother that embraces death to ensure the safety of her innocent babe; the lover that risks and lays down his own life in defence of the beloved; the martyr that smiles on the scaffold and seals the truth of his conviction with his life-blood;—all live and move and have their being in an ethical atmosphere, purer, nobler and holier than that of morality enjoined by "Love thy neighbour as thyself." To love thy neighbour as thyself is surely a noble law, a golden rule; but to shake off self, to love our fellow beings *not for their sake but for the sake of the Supreme*

Self who exists in them and in all and to realise thy neighbour as thyself as taught by the Rishis, to love for the peace of the world and the glory of God, is the noblest of all laws, the very crest gem of a moral precept. That is to say that it is only when man sees himself to be essentially one with his neighbour, that the true ground for social morality, for truth, justice, love, benevolence and the complete devotion of self to the service of his kind into which morality culminates, is really perceived. It is then seen that the good for self is the same as the good for others, and that the highest good for man is the conscious realisation, in his thought, feeling and action, of that unity-in-difference between man and man and man and God which is eternally realised in the Divine consciousness. As the scriptures say, "He who sees all things in the Self and the Self in all things, does not hate any one for that reason. When to the wise man, the Self has become all things, what delusion or what sorrow can there be to him who sees unity? (Isopanishad, 6, 7). Again, "He, whose soul is attuned by yoga, sees the Self in all beings and all beings in the Self; he looks with an impartial eye on all. That yogi, O Arjuna, who looks on the joys and sorrows of all as his own, lives in me." (Bhagavadgita, VI.) In other words, a total denial of self, an unhesitating march into the very forefront of truth, is an absolute necessity in the more advanced stages of that endless pilgrimage called life. Thus the highest morality and the most charming yet the simplest religion of love, says Brahma Rishi Venkata Ratnam, recognise and embrace each other as twin-sisters; and thus a deep self-denying love for God and His world, and not a calculating utilitarianism—"the gospel of enlightened selfishness"—is the basis and the key-stone, the motive power and the moulding process of the highest morality, the noblest manhood.

In other words, as our Reason expands, as our Conscience becomes more keen and quick, and as our human Love more

and more fills our hearts to overflowing, so shall we see more and more of the Supreme Being and that fresh seeing shall put new life and love into our hearts, ever inspiring and carrying us on to the perfection which awaits us. Thus our Religion will be the life of our Morality and our Morality will heighten and strengthen our Religion, the two acting and reacting upon each other to fulfil the highest and noblest purpose of our being.

Again, it is God's Love, say the Rishis, that enables man through arduous self-culture, inspired and impelled by lofty ideals, to build up that solid moral character which is the end and fulfilment of life. The key-note of character is the quickening, passionate sense of the *ought*, of the right, of the proper, of the obligatory, of the truly benevolent. The man of character is he who, in the dark day of doubt or in the troublous day of trial, acts, neither from the calculations of policy, nor from the promptings of future profit, but entirely from an instinctive adherence to the sense of the right, firmly clings to, and faithfully follows what he knows and believes to be the right, the due, the proper, the *ought*. Be it the payment of a time-barred debt or the recognition of a voiceless rival; be it the surrender of personal gain in obedience to the supreme call of unpopular truth or a loyal adherence to the post of danger, while destructive fires devouringly gather around—whichever be the situation—the man of character is the votary of the *ought*, of the right, of the due, of the proper. And this sense of the *ought* does not argue, does not calculate. It is purely and entirely instinctive. It feels and resolves; it does not act and watch. It acts and passes on. Consequently, it requires something more than the mere sense of principle, the mere feeling of duty, both to acquire and exemplify character. It is the formation of that habit which becomes a second nature—a prime force of life. Hence character is something sub-conscious—something that is formed in the unseen foundations of human

life. It is the construction, not in the glare of broad day-light, but in the seclusion of reflective meditation, of a strong marble bed-rock on which are fixed the bases of practical life.

Like the unfailing attraction between the magnet and the needle, the sense of the *ought*, the sense of the right, is verily the ceaseless current of union between God and man. For, when the sense of the right, not stopping with merely its own imperativeness, addresses itself to and receives its sanction and warrant from God, then, says Brahma Rishi Venkata Ratnam, morality is sublimated into piety and right conduct transmuted into love. Thus character becomes only the ethical name for prayerful trust and practised piety.

It is only such strongly-built and highly-developed character, say the Rishis, that gives man a high moral courage—the courage which can look danger and death in the face, unawed and undismayed,—the courage that can encounter loss of ease, of wealth, of friends, of one's own good name,—the courage that can face a world full of howling and of scorn, aye, of loathing and of hate,—the courage that can see all these with a smile and suffering it all, can still toil on, conscious of the result and fearless still; not the courage which hates or smites or kills, but the calm courage which loves and heals and blesses such as hate and smite and kill—the courage which dares resist evil, yet overcome it with good—the courage such has inspired Socrates before the Thirty Tyrants, Jesus before the Sanhedrim, Luther before the Imperial Diet, Galileo before the Papal Court.

Needless to add that the ancient sages lay great stress on personal purity—purity in thought, word and deed, —purity of body, mind and soul—by making it the basis of piety, charging every person to honour the body, as it is the abode of the soul and enjoining his beholding a sister in every "*stranger woman*" and looking on his neighbour's wife as on "*her that gave him life*".

Says the Rishi of the *Kathopanishad* : " *One who has not ceased from wicked conduct, who is not tranquil, who is not self-contained and whose mind is not at rest, does not obtain it (the Supreme Self) even by reason.*" Here the Rishi prefers purity of character to and extols it over the acquisition of knowledge. One, even though possessing the highest knowledge of God, cannot attain Him if he is wicked and impure in mind. The *Mundaka Upanishad* echoes the same truth when it says : " *He cannot be perceived by the eye nor by speech nor by other senses. He cannot be obtained by austerities and deeds. When one's heart is purified through pure knowledge he perceives that indivisible One by meditation.*"

According to the *Brahma Sutras*, as already stated in Chapter II, *supra*, the moral principle is a part of the adoration of God. The Rishi says : " *A command over our passions and over the external senses of the body, and good acts, are declared by the Veda to be indispensable in the mind's approximation to God. They should therefore be strictly taken care of, and attended to both previously and subsequently to such approximation to the Supreme Being.*" In other words, we should not indulge in our evil propensities, but should endeavour to have entire control over them.

The human body which is the focussed result of a hundred scattered processes of development, enshrines, says Brahma Rishi Venkata Ratnam, a being that commands a myriad avenues to mental and moral progress. This distinguishing capacity of man makes sound character a highly complex instrument, capable of producing angelic symphony but easily liable to get out of tune. The sole remedy lies in the serenity which presupposes equal growth on all sides, that purity that points the way to perfection, that cleanliness of heart which is next to godliness of soul. Purity is to character what symmetry is to beauty—not an accident or adornment, but an essential structure. It consists in the uniformity of development—that moving forward of the

whole man, to which alone is awarded the maximum of good. It is that conservation of vital energy which comes of a wise correlation of vital forces.

Applied to social life, purity is complete submission, whole-hearted homage, soul-deep obeisance to what the sublimest English poet has named "*the sun-clad power of chastity.*" It is a call to the spouse to rejoice in the spouse and a command to the parent to be pure amidst pleasure. It is a recognition of the stern truth that the righteousness which exalteth a nation has its secret strength in a well-governed and wise appetite, regulated by the holy dictate of spare temperance. It declares that the happiness of marriage shall be earned only with the obligations of marriage and the blessings of family life shall be the prize only of those who keep its irrevocable pledge. It declares human existence too sacred to be cradled in lust. It proclaims the marriage bond too strong to be dissolved by freaks of taste, defects of law or even the transition of death. To pursue pleasure as the purpose of life is the animal; to subdue pleasure to the purpose of life is the man. That follows the lead of instinct, this guides instinct with reason. Thus the animal is the creature of the day; but man is the pilgrim of eternity. Temperance—wise moderation in the legitimate, cheerful abstinence from the forbidden—is accordingly the only law befitting man; and purity is temperance in that supreme relation of the sexes, which, as ordering the joys of home, prescribing the ideals of society and linking generation to generation, sways the destinies of our race.

Social purity is chastity in body and chastity in spirit—a stern repugnance to whatever is base or vulgar, indecent or immodest, in work or pleasure, speech or song, thought or sentiment,—a stout opposition, despite the threat of law or the frown of society, the curse of pretentious piety or the loss of spurious attachment, to every rule or habit, practice

or institution that defeats or tends to defeat the high purpose of human life by gilding shame with fashion or condoning carnal longings as venial. It brands as mean and cowardly notwithstanding mimic nobility and affected bravery, the man who uses the frailty of the weak or the want of the needy for his own base purpose, who haunts beauty till it is tarnished or pursues innocence till it is vitiated, who repays friendship with infidelity, or affects piety to pollute all the more securely. It demurs to the law that, though backed by power, declines to shield the helpless from the ravages of the brutal or to screen the guileless from the craft of the wily. It decries the customs that invite undisguised shame to the hall of honour or restore convicted impurity to the place of position. It silences the song that deifies the brute and proscribes the picture that perpetuates the immodest. It shuns the book that feeds the budding mind with "the sewage of the slum" and rebukes the speech that glorifies "our swine enjoyments". It loathes the longings that "fancy begets on youthful thoughts" and detests the desire that delight to wallow in "troughs of Zolaism". It stifles the taste that tinctures the soul with the taints of hell and condemns the creed that caters to the carnal and calls it piety.

On the other hand, social purity esteems the life that does not deviate into guilty pleasure and honours him as a hero who ever guards the citadel of his senses. It upholds the law that vindicates morality and espouses the custom that conforms to righteousness. It enjoys the speech that wells up from a clean heart and appreciates the mood that contemplates the sublime. It values the song that softens the savage in man and prizes the art that sublimates the pure. It cherishes the sentiment that aspires after the true and lives by the faith that adorns the All-Holy. In a word it consecrates the entire life from the cradle of childhood

to the skyey tent of sagehood, unto the hastening of that far-off divine event, when man and woman through their hallowed union will achieve the glory of a God-illuminated self—that sovereign power which consists in self-controlling strength and self-knowing wisdom, in self-denying goodness and self-reverencing holiness.

Purity in personal, domestic and social life commends itself as the very key-stone of moral strength and national greatness. Trample on woman and we trample on our own moral nature. Respect woman, care for her, work for her, give her knightly shelter and protection, and we shall find the loftier emotions gaining sway in our heart and touching our life to finer issues. Whether we be young or old, we should think of the holy names of sister, daughter, wife and mother; we should think of all the holy influences which stream forth upon an evil world from the relations which those sacred names represent, and resolve, one and all, that under no sky from which the sun shines down, shall those names have a holier, tenderer meaning than in this fair land of *Aryavarta*.

We should so conduct ourselves even in married life as to feel and say in the words of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad "*Nava areyjayayai Kamayajaya priyabhavathi, Athmanasthu Kamayajaya priyabhavathi*"—"Verily a wife is not dear, that you may love the wife; but that you may love the *Self*, therefore, a wife is dear." It is said of Maharishi Devendranath Tagore—himself, a noble father of worthy children—that he dreamt on a certain occasion that his deceased mother approached him and, after ascertaining his welfare stood at a distance and enquired how he was engaged. He replied that he was engaged in doing the behests of The Truth. And she tenderly said:—"Kulam pavithram, jananee kru-thardha!" How enviable the son whose mother can thus bless him! But which mother will deign to pronounce that benediction, when the son, with his low tastes, dishonours

the sex of that mother? How can he that has dishonoured the sex of his mother deserve to be blessed by the mother? Would we mould in ourselves a pure, strong, genial and beneficent character, then we should learn to revere the sex of the mother; for, thus alone man will attain to the seat of strength and the shrine of bliss. Says a fine Sanscrit maxim, "Blessed is the son that sees a mother's face wherever he turns". Is not this *matrubhavam*—this filial reverence for woman—noted as a primal element, as an essential factor, in the spiritual constitution of that paragon of *bhaktas*—Prahlada? It is this purifying look and commanding outlook that constitutes the fountain-source, not only of gallant chivalry, but of sanctified humanity. Aye, bow at the feet of the mother; and you bow before incarnate divinity. The mother's arms are verily the golden cradle in which is nurtured whatever is bright and beautiful, high-souled and heavenly, among the children of men.

In this connection, it is interesting to bear in mind the sanctity of an ancient Indian Sage, who, when a celestial nymph visited his hermitage, employed her blandishments to disturb his penance and immediately laid bare her 'mysterious charms,' exclaimed in child-like innocence, "*Would that one could have a mother of such beauty*"!

Coming to our own times, we find the immortal Sivaji, the greatest of our national martial heroes, was filled with the Upanishadic spirit of pure, true, chivalrous love, when, on the offer of a beautiful Mahammadan princess as a present by the captain of his troops who captured her, he rebuked him saying: "*Had my mother been as handsome as this lady is, I should have inherited some of that handsomeness; and then I should have a right to look at her. Take her away, therefore; let us not tarnish her with our black hearts.*" That was worthy of a Maharaja; that showed a true hero; there lay that real might of a great founder of a potent empire.

It is this Upanishadic ideal of purity of body, mind and soul, purity of thought, word and deed, that breathes through the lays of Dr. Rabindranath Tagore, who at an early age, imbibed the spirit of the Vedanta under the inspiration of his noble father, the famous Maharishi Debendranath Tagore, as witness, for instance, the following excerpt from his immortal *Gitanjali* :—

"Life of my love, I shall ever try to keep my body pure knowing that Thy living touch is upon all my limbs. I shall ever try to keep all untruths out from my thoughts, knowing that Thou art that truth which has kindled the light of reason in my mind. I shall ever try to drive all evils away from my heart and keep my love in flower, knowing that Thou hast Thy seat in the inmost shrine of my heart. And it shall be my endeavour to reveal Thee in my actions, knowing it is Thy power that gives me strength to act."

Needless to add that the Upanishads are the very fountain source of Rabindranath's philosophy as we find it outlined in his poetry and prose, drama and dance, music and paintings, stories and novels, essays and articles.

In passing, I am tempted to note here how Rabindranath's father, Debendranath Tagore, was attracted into the fold of the Upanishadic cult. While in his youth Debendranath Tagore was passing through the severest mental and spiritual transition of life, he chanced upon a leaf of the Upanishads accidentally blown in by the wind. He picked it up, showed it to the family priest and requested him to read that leaf of Sanscrit matter and tell him what it was about. The priest read it, but could not make much of it and advised the young Zamindar to send for Ramachandra Vidya Vageesh, the direct spiritual successor of Rajah Rammohan Roy and the faithful soul that sustained and kept alive through several years the little light that the departing hand of the Rajah had lit. Ramachandra Vidya Vageesh

examined the leaf and said : " This is from the Isopanishad." It contained the following text : "*God is immanent in all things, in whatever lives and moves in the universe ; enjoy, therefore, without being attached ; covet not wealth belonging to others.*" Thereafter Debendranath took vigorously to the study of the Upanishads. He was absorbed in it and published a selection of the Upanishads under the title of *Brahma-dharma*.

The sages of the Upanishads proclaim the unity and fellowship of man not only with his fellow beings but also with the lower sentient orders of creation—the dumb animals, our mute co-sharers in God's Providence, as they toil for us, drudge for us, till for us, draw for us, run for us, cater unto us, like sisters and brothers, with nourishing food and refreshing drink. They enjoin that even crawling worms, tiny insects and animalcules should be held dear, treated with compassion and kindness, because they also are the children and the creation of God. Our commiseration and kindness towards them naturally demands that they should not be killed for our food. If only one has followed the dreadful and melancholy procession of doomed cattle and sheep to a slaughter house and witnessed the monstrous cruelties inflicted on them by man, invoking, paradoxical as it may sound, it is yet true—even the name and blessing of God in the very act of killing and the inhuman degradation imposed by man on men and even on women and children engaged in the provision of an absolutely unnecessary article of food, he would never thereafter be tempted to touch what is called " animal food ". Our great Manu has said that not only the butcher who kills the goat but also he who cooks and he who serves and he who eats the meat are alike answerable for the loss of that precious life. It is needless to add that to those who lived out the vegetarian life in its wholeness, there would come health of body, intellectual confidence, peace with man and nature, the joy of beauty in life and universa]

empathy for all beings and the sense of the co-ordination of the individual and the Universal which is the highest experience attainable by incarnate humanity.

Buddha, who developed the practical side of the teaching of the Upanishads, who was therefore extremely sensitive to the sin of helping to take away a life none can give, preached the same message when he said: "*With everything, whether it is above or below, remote or near, visible or invisible, thou shalt preserve a relation of unlimited love without any animosity or without a desire to kill. To live in each a consciousness, while standing or walking, sitting or lying down till you are asleep, is Brahma Vihara, living and loving and having our joy in the Spirit of Brahma*".

Accordingly, it behoves every one of us to heartily co-operate with those humanitarians who are engaged in the sacred cause of alleviating the sufferings inflicted by man on the dumb animals. Sri Rama's hosts were building the bridge across the southern channel; a poor squirrel felt it her duty to help the righteous cause. She dives into the sea, rolls on the shore and shakes her little weight of sand on the bridge. She catches the eye of the hero who deigns to acknowledge her services by tenderly passing his kind fingers over her back. Such will be our small service in the holy cause of *Ahimsa* for which Buddha lived and died.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE RISHIS' PERCEPTION OF GOD AS PARĀMA PURUSHA OR THE SUPREME PERSON; ANTHROPO- MORPHIC CONCEPTION OF GOD, A HUMAN NECESSITY.

From what has been stated in the preceding chapters, it will be seen that to the Rishis of the Upanishads, God is not a mere impersonal essence, a metaphysical abstraction separated from the universe, as is unfortunately represented by some modern philosophers of Europe, but a personal entity,

a Living and Loving Being, the Parama Purusha or the Supreme Person, inwoven into all their concerns; a lamp unto the feet and a light unto the eye, "a fruit held in the clutches of the hand."

Incidentally, it seems necessary before proceeding with the theme of this chapter to answer a philosophical objection commonly hurled against *Brahmajñanis* from an anthropomorphic stand-point. It is urged that God being a spirit without a body cannot be known or realised by man; and our ascription to Him of human attributes, affections, feelings such as, power, knowledge, love, goodness, compassion, forgiveness, as understood by and derived by man from his experience, is nothing short of misrepresenting God in the form of man. In other words, any conception of God bearing the slightest resemblance to human attributes, even of the highest and best, is set down at once as false, as only limiting and degrading and making a God in the likeness of man as contrary to reason and piety, besides being idolatrous and profane. Such critics forget, however, that everything thought about anything in the universe must invariably be the result of human experience. The very terms, "Infinite" and "Eternal" as applied to space and time are derived from our experience of space and its boundaries and of the passing moments and of the fixed periods necessary in the transactions of life. From our experience of limited space we simply remove all the boundaries and we reach the idea of Infinite space. From our experience of time, of longer or shorter periods of time, we remove the idea of limitation, and so come to the conception of Eternity *i.e.*, time which has no beginning and which will have no end. Space and time are thus necessary forms of human thought and therefore we who are human can do no other by any mental legerdemain than think them; and as these are forms built into the structure of our minds, we must think in those forms and it is vain to try to escape. These ideas and terms are no doubt

anthropomorphic i.e., derived from human experience and yet no one in his senses would dream of objecting to their validity on that account.

Again, the Infinite and Eternal Energy as applied to God is but an idea drawn from experience from human energy itself, an exertion of will, an exercise of power. We know, however, that our experience of energy must be different from God's experience of it, inasmuch as we are finite creatures and He the Infinite Creator. All we can vouch for as absolute fact is the manifestation of Will and Power similar in kind to our own and yet immeasurably higher and greater.

Take again knowledge. Unless there were knowledge infinitely transcending our own, the order of the world could not be maintained. The discoveries of science, small as they are hitherto, are all disclosures of an immeasurable, inconceivable knowledge which God alone must possess.

Take again conscience. We find it always bidding us to do what we believe to be right and forbidding us to do what we believe to be wrong. We are fully justified by reason in saying that the Author of the conscience must Himself be good, for, no evil God could desire His creatures to be good. This is pure anthropomorphism—but it is none the less true, obviously true.

All conceptions of God known to us are of human origin, and have arisen alike out of the desire and the necessity of framing a God after our own image. It was therefore to be expected—and all history confirms it—that the conceptions of God have varied from time to time and in different races, and among different individuals of the same race, and in the lifetime of the same individual; that those variations in the conceptions of God have generally corresponded with the variations in intellect, in culture, in moral insight and in personal excellence of character. The lower the men are,

the lower their conceptions of God. The higher they were in the scale of human development, the higher their conceptions of God. Illustrations would be as endless as it is needless. Suffice it to say that as men have a two-fold nature, the animal and the spiritual, as already stated in the preceding chapter, so long as the animal predominated and the spiritual remained subordinate or dormant, the anthropomorphic conceptions would necessarily be gross and the conceptions of God would correspond to the animal side of human nature. But when the spiritual side became developed in Reason, Conscience and love, the older conceptions of God would begin to appear gross and unworthy, would be necessarily denounced and cast away to make room for higher and higher conceptions. So that, speaking generally, it is true that higher religious thoughts about God, have been invariably accompanied by the rejection of anthropomorphic conceptions which had come to be regarded as gross and only gross when compared with more spiritual ideas.

Our ascribing to God all that is highest, purest, noblest and sublimest in our experience, stands for true anthropomorphism and forms part of true religion. On the other hand, to impute to Him our limitations and weakness, our frailties and foibles, our abominations and impurities represents false anthropomorphism and leads to false religion. That religious teaching which outrages human nature and represents God in the worst of human passions is not merely false but wicked anthropomorphism and must be eschewed.

To return to our theme, when the Rishis proclaimed God as formless and at the same time described Him as "*Person* with a thousand heads, of thousand eyes and thousand feet" (Svetesvatara), they used only a figurative poetic language to express His Omnipotence, Omniscience and All-Pervasiveness. Needless to state that this anthropomorphic instinct is universal. The most uninstructed a

most refined secretly regard the Creator as having the essentials of man, the estimates differing only with the progress of their own culture, as stated above. In this there is an underlying truth of tremendous significance. Be it the worship of the ancestor, or the tree, or the wood, or the stone, or the lotus or the snake, the inanimate and semi-animate are invested for the moment with a higher personality. And higher humanity, in latest or earliest times, is practically the Spirit of God. God in the finite—in nature, in life, and most of all in man and man's achievements—rules the world's faith and spiritual life.

We know '*person*' is the highest entity of which we have knowledge and of which we can conceive. Although we do not doubt that *the Being of God* comprises that which infinitely transcends the loftiest attributes of which we are able to frame an idea, we believe that we approach nearer to the absolute truth by describing God as '*Person*' than by refraining from such description. Says Prof. Le Conte in his admirable book on '*Evolution and its Relation to Religious Thought*': "In our view of the nature of God, the choice is not between personality and something *lower* than personality, viz., an *unconscious* force operating Nature by *necessity*, as the materialists and pantheists would have us believe; but between personality as we know it ourselves and something inconceivably *higher* than personality . . . Self-conscious personality is the highest thing we know or can conceive. We offer him the very best and truest we have when we call Him a Person; even though we know that this, our best, falls short of the infinite reality."

We also know that even our own personality, that sense of unity, force and individuality in our nature—is not identical with our body but our true invisible self which is the seat of consciousness and of will and the source of all thought, feeling and action. Our self-consciousness, our thought

and our will, are all absolutely essential properties of personality. All are spiritual and all are personal. But inasmuch as our consciousness of personality is spiritual, we may reasonably ascribe such personality to God and say that He is self-conscious, knows that He is and what He is, that He is conscious of all else which is not Himself, that He has thoughts—for we see some of His thoughts expressed in His works—therefore that He has a will, *i.e.*, that He plans and purposes to attain a given end and chooses the means of attaining it. If in a microcosm, we, human beings, possess this self-consciousness, thought and will, it is really only common sense to ascribe them to our Maker, only in an infinitely higher degree. But in doing this, we *must* conceive of God as a *Person*, as a separate individual who is consciously distinct from all other individual souls and from everything which is not Himself, as One who acts with a purpose and a will, a mind and a heart all His own. Knowledge and self-knowledge, therefore, are essential elements in personality. And to us, God is a person in that sense and cannot be less than personal.

Again personality in man is not a mere idea. It is a real object with power, intelligence, love and holiness. God has all these and infinitely more. We therefore call Him *Parama Purusha*, the Supreme Person, the highest, the loftiest, the truest, the worthiest, the noblest, and the sublimest Being we can ever conceive.

More than all, Personality is the embodiment of Love. God, as the God of Love, is therefore the Supreme Person—*Paramapurusha*, owning in unbounded amplitude the distinguishing faculty of introspecting, energising and organising personality, namely, awareness of self, perception of non-self and comprehension of the 'twain' in the unity of being, of conjugate life and confluent love. Love is an unsubstantial dream, a fanciful figment except as repositied in, and welling up from, a person. God has therefore manifested His

will and purpose in the creation of what is called Human Love. The highest human love known to us, which is most manifest in devotion and self-sacrifice for the true welfare of others, is inconceivable of any being who is not loving; no one can understand love who has not felt it; therefore if our love has come from God, it is only because He is Himself loving in the highest degree and has made us partakers of this unspeakable gift.

Only a Living God, only a Personal God, only a God who knows and cares for the real needs of His children can be a Loving God. Only He, who dwelling in the light which "*shines above the heaven, higher than all, higher than everything in the highest world, beyond which there are no other worlds,*" (Chandogya) and which no man can approach unto, nevertheless, dwells in the heart of all, more particularly in the hearts of the contrite and lowly, and is closer to every soul than any other soul can ever be; only a God like that can be a true Object of Worship, a trustworthy God, a faithful Friend and an infinitely tender and pitiful Father.

An impersonal Author of the Universe is therefore impossible. A God who does not know that He exists, who does not know that anything else exists, who has neither will nor purpose, is not a God at all. There is no God at all, unless He be a Person, a Living God, a Loving and Righteous God, who knows everything and has will and purpose in all He does or causes to be done.

The Rishis therefore touched the zenith of their penetrating insight and devotional fervour when they declared God as the "*Golden Person, the bright Immortal Person, dearer than son, dearer than wealth, dearer than anything else, nearer than the limbs and organs, closer than the heart and the life pulse, sweeter than all physical enjoyment.*" "*Thou art our Father, Thou art our Mother, Thou art our beloved friend; Thou art the source of all strength. Thou art He that beareth the*

burden of the universe ; help me bear the little burden of this life." So sang the Rishis of the Upanishads. And man's relation to this tremendous, inalienable, concrete, living Personality is declared to be a relation of responsibility, of obedience, of voluntary self-subjection, the recognition of His infinite, absolute authority as the sanction for the sense of duty and righteousness asserting itself in every individual soul. At the same time, He, the Holy Spirit that encircles the universe, He, the Heaven-enshrined One, is proclaimed as the sweet companion that dwells in the human soul being accessible to every one of His children, and who clearly intends as a central purpose of His universe that we should return His love with the love of children for their father. By multiplying the love of human hearts for one another in the world and by showing Himself the friend and lover of all pure love, He would undoubtedly lead us on to love Him, the source and fountain of all our best affections. We have never seen Him, never heard His voice. There are many that are blind even to the spiritual vision of Him and who fail to catch the silent speech which utters itself from Him to the quiet heart. And yet He is there, He is here, for us to love and all noblest and best humanity has loved Him with deathless fervour. It is at once the truest and the most gloriously beautiful solution of the riddle of the universe to believe that God has knit it together in the bonds of law and breathed into it spiritual life to the end, above all other ends, that it may sustain countless myriads of spiritual beings who shall love one another faithfully and well and love their God with all their heart and mind, soul and strength.

Accordingly, upon manifold tokens of His affectionate bounty and not upon bare fear or authority, God desires to form a union and intimacy with the human soul. As we love our parents from whom we derived our being, sustenance and protection, while we stood in need and ever after cherish unchanging and undying love, so God would have us love

Him in whom we live and move and breathe and have our being and from whom proceeds every good and perfect gift ; and as out of this strong affection we not only obey but also honour the commandments of our parents, so wills He that we should obey and honour the commandments of our Supreme Father. As we love a friend who took us by the hand in youth and helped us step by step, up the hill of life and found for our feet a room to rest in and for our hands an occupation to work at, so God wishes to be loved for having taken us up and compassed us from the first moment of life and found us favour in the sight of men. As we revere a teacher of wisdom, who nursed our opening mind and fed it with knowledge and foresight until the way of truth and peacefulness lay disclosed before us, so God wishes to be revered for giving our soul all the faculties of knowledge and for nurturing all the hidden truths which those faculties reveal. In fact, there is not a single truly human attachment by which the sons of men are bound together, which does not bind us more strongly and more personally to God. There lies the foundation of all generous and noble sentiments towards God—of all loving, dutiful, reverential conduct towards Him within our minds and in our out-ward walk and conversation.

This moral relation of man to God is not one-sided, but universal, ubiquitous, not moon-like appearing at intervals but sun-like, forming the source, seen or unseen, of all our light and heat. Strong or weak as may be its influence on us as individuals, this sacred relationship is the greatest thing with which we have to deal from the cradle to the grave. And this holds good whether we give ourselves up to it or reject it.

When man apprehends God as powerful, wise and good, as possessed of will, reason and righteousness, obviously, he thinks of Him as bearing some likeness to himself, as having in an infinite or perfect measure qualities which

human creatures have in a finite and imperfect measure. Saint Kabir has in his own homely and penetrating manner enunciated this essential element of personality in true religion. Says he to his disciples : "*Is it about Hari that you enquire? How, in what manner, can I show you what Hari is like? Is it a buffalo that I might fasten to a peg and exhibit to your physical eye? Or is it a coin that I might straightaway pass into your hand? As thou art, so is Hari.*" "*As thou art, so is Hari.*" This seems to many a startling assertion. At first sight we are liable to think it almost blasphemous that a saint like Kabir should make man the very measure of God and God should be asked to be apprehended in terms of man. However, though not always put in this blunt form, this is a vital truth clearly stated and repeatedly emphasised by several great teachers. The very same truth is echoed in the teachings of Jesus Christ when he said. "*He that hath seen the son hath seen the Father.*" And in India there has been quite a succession of prophets and teachers who have proclaimed the very same truth—" *Would thou see God in the vividness of true presentation, then behold Him in thy self.*" Says Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa to his disciples "*Are you seeking God? Then seek Him in man. The Divinity is manifest in man more than in any other object.*" In understanding this truth we should not fancy that the teacher is venturing, presuming to present God to us as the image of man. But the teacher's real intent is just the reverse; he desires to present man as the image of God. It is not that God is to be viewed as a reflection, a copy, of man ; but that man is to be appraised as a reflection, a copy, of God.

Would we appreciate the finest genius of a master-artist, be it in song or in colour? It is not to the rough sketch or to the prentice production but to the finished piece that we have to turn. Similarly, if God, the all-perfect God, is to be visualised, vividly felt and enjoyed, it is by the rebirth

of the God-like in the human soul that this great revelation of God's glory can be accomplished.

Again, Jami, the Persian Sufi poet, declares "*Thou art the glass in which His Face is reflected ; in truth, He is manifested but thou art hidden.*" In other words, if man would realise his God as reflected in himself, then he should make himself godly. To the extent to which and in the manner in which it is granted to any one to reproduce in himself the Divine qualities, not in mere abstract theory, no, not even in occasional burst of sentiment but in the abiding and impressive presentation of the virtues developed and the character cultivated in oneself, to that extent and in that manner alone is God revealed. No other way is open to man for the realisation of God. Mystics, Sufis, *Rishis* of all times and climes have avowed that true knowing consists in *becoming* and *being*. We know an object only when and in so far as we become, imbibe the true nature of that object. To stand apart and to turn the microscope of analysis, and, as it were, map out the miniature of an object—that gives only the surface-view of the object. If we penetrate with second sight into the object itself, we come to its vital core, its inner soul. This is pre-eminently true of our understanding of the perfection of the Deity, so far as it is given to us to understand it. As the photographer's plate, to the measure of its true sensitiveness reproduces the original faithfully and impressively, so the soul is, as stated by Brahma Rishi Venkat Ratnam, the magic mirror on which according to its freedom from dust and twist, God is vividly reflected. God as Love is self-donative ; God as Beauty is self-reflective ; God as Holiness is self-propagative. And man at his best constituting the sublimest instance of that Divine Self-donation, Self-reflection and Self-propagation, must shine forth as the brightest mirror—aye, the noblest image—of his Maker.

By far the most sacred and the sweetest relationship declared as eternally subsisting between God and man is that of Father and Son. We call God Father, because, He embodies in Himself the perfection of paternal attribute—the concentration of paternal wisdom and watchfulness. And this relationship is one ordained by God Himself. It was not man's invention but was God's own inspiration when the human intellect conceived, the human heart felt, and the human tongue uttered the sacred expression "*Param Pitha*," "Supreme Father." In numberless ways, through untold suggestions and expressions unto every sense and every power of man, He brings home to us again and again the saving truth, the transporting truth that He is the Primal Parent of all. In His family the orphan is unknown. In His household, the parentless has no place. He is verily and convincingly the Parent of one and all. Not merely unto those to whom the good things of life have been abundantly given, but even unto those who seem condemned to life-long suffering and sorrow, He is the fostering Parent. Every object He has created, He cherishes with His particular and most loving providence and manifests Himself to each according to its needs.

Through all seasons and times, amid alternating night and light, descending showers and answering harvest, the ceaseless flow of streams and rivers, the cool breeze that infuse life into the drooping frame, the shining stars,—the eternal witnesses of God's watch and protection—every possession and every association of life, whether in the seclusion of the family or in the bracing brotherhood of work and exercise, always and everywhere, we are impressed with the gladdening experience of His personal and individual intimate and immediate relationship with each one of us : our own dear and fostering parent. Through every pore of the human frame, with every beat of the human heart

is again and again revealed and proclaimed the message of His merciful Parent-hood.

To such a Personal God alone our souls can turn in prayer as to our Father. Not inexhaustible energy, not irresistible force, not indomitable power, it is a *Supreme Personality* that our yearning spirits need. We approach Him not as the Creator in His wisdom, not as the King in His Majesty, not as the Judge in His equity, but as the Father, near and accessible, tender and gentle, inviting and embracing; the Father combining in Himself, the Author, the Care-taker, the Companion, the Exemplar, the Preceptor. As our personal Father, how loving, how personally loving, how permanently loving, how intently loving, how sweetly loving, how certainly loving He is! All may fail; streams may flow back; winds may be hushed in silence; stars that have shone on through æons may be quenched in darkness; heavens may be rolled up into a carpet; earth may break up into mist; time that has fled on through immemorial ages may come to the stop of silence; the whole creation so rich with the manifestations of His majesty and mercy may be engulfed in disorder; but His Fatherly love never fails, is never exhausted. In the embrace of such a personal God alone as our Mother, our simple child-like souls can revel with those tender and sweet smiles which characterise a little child, with that beauty inexpressible which resides in that benign form, with that heavenly purity that sparkles in its genial looks, with that guileless simplicity, lamb-like innocence, appealing meekness, touching humility that adorns all its graceful movements, with that ceaseless consciousness of the mother's presence and the uninterrupted joy of feeling the mother's nearness that dominates its innocent thoughts.

In our conception of God as the *Parama Purusha*, the Supreme Person, Saint Ramakrishna Parama Hamsa gives exceeding prominence to His relation to us as Mother. We

call the Supreme Being by that sweet, celestial-scented, nectar-filled, sanctity-suffused word *Mother*, because, the sweetness, tenderness, forgiveness, unfailing love of maternity are found in perfection in His divine nature. We call Him Mother, because the Mother's love is divine everywhere and includes almost all features—the sweetest, profoundest and most lasting features of human relationship. We proclaim Him Mother because, He holds the universe in His arms and bestows on each one of His children a mother's special care, a mother's special love, a mother's special nestling, a mother's special kiss, a mother's special embrace. While the human mother merely transmits life, He, the Divine Mother, imparts life; while the human mother merely fosters life, He, the Divine Mother, generates life. He is the Mother in every maternal bosom, the Mother that cherishes in tenderness and sanctifies with holiness.

As the wearied child finds repose on the lap and the bosom of the mother, as the thirsty hart runs to the life-giving spring, as the returning bird at the day's close seeks shelter and rest in the dear nest, so do our souls find in God, our benign Mother, the rest we so badly need, the refreshment that we so urgently want, the repose and security that alone can calm the turmoil of the soul, and the rejuvenating life that will bring fresh hope and new joy unto the drooping spirit.

To call God as the Mother, to feel Him as the Mother, to approach Him as the Mother, to embrace Him as the Mother, to rejoice in Him as the Mother—this is the bliss and beatitude of every soul born in the childhood of faith and love.

The food of our bodies is His; the refreshment of our minds is His; the nutriment of our hearts is His; the sustenance of our souls is His; our all is His. Literally, indubitably, His hand lifts unto the mouth of each child every morsel of food that goes to sustain and enrich

life. The drink sipped in is the Mother's nectared love. The sleep that refreshes is repose on the Mother's lap. What is the darkness of the night but the drawing closer of the Mother that the child may be alone with Her in the sweet slumbers out of which the child shall bound back into refreshed life by day-break? We see His huge Bosom, the Infinite Bosom of the Mother, overflowing with the milk of life and strength. He holds to our lips not only the cup of joy but also the cup of sorrow and like the tenderest mother on earth makes us drink the bitterest draught for our soul's life and salvation.

Just as it is the most perfect pleasure and most rich of all pleasures for a child to have its mother by, even only to feel that she is there and with it or within reach of its cry, so to our soul, the mere sense of God's nearness and presence is the most frequent and the most delightful of all enjoyments. Oh, what a terrific pang and torture we suffer when separated from Him! Day in and day out, He is with us as a human mother by the child's cradle with her constant care, ceaseless watchfulness, inexhaustible kindness and interminable love. He is the main factor in our lives, the sun and centre round which we, like children, revolve and to which we cling tenaciously.

Even as the infant knows nothing in this world except its father and its mother; even as it lisps in semi-articulate language with great tenderness the name of its father and mother and recognises them and them alone; so shall our hearts recognise Him, our Benign Mother, as our all-in all! Even as the child recognises its parents not through knowledge, not through philosophy but instinctively, so our hearts, in a state of regenerate existence, instinctively recognise Him as our Divine Parent. Even as the world's temptations have no influence over children, even as there is no distinction whatever in their eyes between the grass that fades and withers and is trodden under feet by men and the riches and treasures

of the world; so may the riches and treasures of this world be nothing to our regenerate soul! As children pass through this world without being moved or tempted and as there cannot be any defilement in their little minds, so shall our regenerate soul go through the thorny paths of this world without being defiled or contaminated by its sins!

Even as the child seeks not separation but loves to be seated on the exalted throne of the loving mother's lap, so also fed with the holy milk of grace from God's bosom, which renders the whole process of existence a growth of strength, a progress of wisdom, a pilgrimage of holiness, a triumph of joy, and ever thus nurtured, fostered, developed and sanctified, we, His children, desire, elect, love to abide in the lap of His love. In sleep we are gathered into the Bosom of our Mother, to be nursed with Her care and to be nerved with Her peace. In awakening we rise with refreshed minds, with renewed hopes, with re-cheered hearts, to obtain the blessing of the Mother, to receive the behest of the Mother and to rejoice in the service of the Mother.

God is not merely the Mother that begets but the Mother that spends herself for the child and yet remains unexhausted in the infinity of Her Love. As we glorify Him as the Mother, how we feel that the whole universe is one vast nursery of the Mother! As we think of Him as the Mother, we feel the holiness of our being the children of the Holy Mother. As we greet Him as the Mother, we feel assured that from the Bosom of the Mother nothing can issue that is not tender and loving. And as we adore Him as the Mother, we feel cradled in the very lap of Love and Holiness, there to be perfected by Him and in Him. May He keep vivid in us the joy of an unbroken relationship, companionship and communion with Him, so that the whole compass of our life be both embraced from without and radiated from within by His sacred Presence! May we realise that if we miss the Mother, we lose the life; if we have the Mother, we defy

death. If the Mother's face is hidden, how the soul is not only enveloped in gloom but sunk in despair! The whole world presents a dreary desert. The Mother's face disclosed, how the soul feels the radiance of a new dawn and the joy of a new blessing!

In Him, the Divine Mother, the child finds his all—his strength, his hope, his courage, his aspiring ideal and his ever-protecting stay and shelter. The child that has the mother has the whole world with him. The child that is on the lap of the mother is secure beyond the reach of the world's strifes and enmities. The child that can look up to the divine countenance of the mother is not touched by the storms and eclipses of life. She is all-in-all to her child. From her bosom fed, in her arms nestled, on her lap seated, by her smile encouraged, in her love enshrined, what need hath he? She is all-sufficing unto the child. Blessed be the day when the Divine Mother gathers Her children and the children seek the Mother. The wearied child, the frightened child, the buoyant child, the apparently rebellious child, the truly loving child, all leap into the arms of the common Mother—one silently to repose on the bosom of Love, another timidly to cling to the arms of Support, another boisterously to rejoice on the lap of Bliss, another tremulously to lie prostrate before the feet of Forgiveness, another innocently to look up and smile at the blessed countenance of Beauty. Angels in heaven rejoice. All creation sends forth a chorus of praise and joy at this happy union of the Mother and the child.

The Supreme Being is the Mother of all Love and Holiness. He confounds us by His greatness and overpowers us by His Love. He dazzles us by His Holiness which myriads of suns cannot equal. What can we offer Him in return for His inexhaustible love, ceaseless protection, all moments of our life like a guardian Angel? What have we which can possibly be called our own to render unto Him? The child

receives the blessing and comes back only to give a kiss. The child receives its toys and comes back only to show them with dust and dirt on. The child receives the strengthening embrace and looks up and smiles. The child receives the fostering care and with closed eyes feels the gratitude. Thus, we go to Him, our own beloved Mother, with nothing in our hands but only a sweet kiss, a loving embrace and surging gratitude. Thus we go to our beloved Mother, not for any boon or blessing, but to feel warm in Her presence and to show that we are fully alive to and heartily thankful for Her gifts. The devotion of our hearts, the gratitude of our hearts, the thankfulness of our hearts, the trustful, confiding belief of our hearts, the hopeful, cheerful love of our hearts, is our present unto Her. We know unto the mother, it is the broken toys, the innocent smile, the inarticulate words, the unexpressed love, that are dear.

According to the Rishis, the ever-cheering, the ever comforting smile on the countenance of the Divine Mother, Her beaming face is not averted from the worst sinner, even though the sinner turns away from the Mother. That is the secret spring, that is the irresistible power which compels repentance in us. Those of us who have studied the life of St. Augustine will remember how he was a prodigal in early life; and his mother used to kneel on Sundays at the altar of the church and pray that her son might be saved. But the young man would not care for the feelings of the mother; he was absolutely callous and indifferent to the smarting, writhing parent to whom he was the object of incessant prayer. At church, one day, the pastor beheld that, when all others had left, the mother knelt down on the hard stone and, with tearful eyes and heaving breast, prayed her son might be saved; and he said to her, "Go thy way, woman, the son of so many tears cannot be lost." And as this was reported to the young Augustine; he said, "Does my mother *yet* love me? Then

I cannot sin." The Mother's love compels repentance in us as if by a magical power. So rotten though to the core, palsied and completely contaminated with sin, yet in the pure arms of the Divine Mother, we are held dear. Our contrition cries out "Do we deserve pardon, Mother, dost Thou yet love us? Can even Thy Infinite Grace take away the iniquity of our revolt against Thee?" Pardon is Divine Grace. It is not merited; it is not supplicated; but she, the Divine Mother, out of pure grace and abundant benevolence says: "*No pardon child; pardon pre-supposes offence; pardon pre-supposes anger; pardon pre-supposes alienation; the Mother is never alienated; the Mother is never angered; the Mother is never offended. Thou, my child, hast never need of pardon.*" Thus the Supreme Being, at once Our Father and Mother, overpowers us by His Grace.

Yes, the Mother is never offended when she is all milk and honey of love and compassion, mercy and sympathy. She has therefore no need to exercise pardon. So are also the Divine Mother's saints. Amidst intensest provocation and torture, they stand unoffended and unruffled and even pity, bless, pray for those who inflict the suffering on them. Have we not heard that blissful story about Tukaram? How, returning home with a bundle of sugarcane a disciple had presented to him one evening, he parted with all the canes but one to the persons he met with on the way and at length, on reaching home with the one solitary cane, he was confronted by his wife, a sharp-tongued xanthippe, with the query, "Who could be that niggardly creature that presented you with this single stick?" Then as he explained the facts, she belaboured him with that very cane; and as it broke into two pieces, he picked up one and explained, "You, as a very loving wife, must share even this single sugarcane with your husband." If thus there is no occasion to forgive, there is, however, every occasion to give. Innumerable are the

opportunities God grants for the exercise of love. Have we not also heard of the Greek slave-sage, Epictetus—how his master was hard-hearted and, for some slight lapse on his part, put his leg into the torturing machine? Says the sage, ‘Don’t you apply it too hard. I shall at that rate become a cripple and be of no use to you hereafter’? With the broken leg, in old age, he can say, “You, younger men, may go about freely and enjoy the blessings of life; grey-haired and lame, I am thankful I can sit down and glorify my God.”

And what is it that nevertheless holds us back from the Divine Mother? It is the ignorance of this fact—that though ever so rebellious, ever so ungrateful, ever so unworthy, the Divine Mother holds *us* dear and paradoxical as it may seem, unjust as it may appear, in the economy of the Divine Mother the greater the sin, the dearer the child; the stronger the invitation, the more torturing the consciousness that all that abundant, inexhaustible love has been so bestially ignored.

From the above, it will be seen why Saint Ramakrishna Parama Hamsa would dance in ecstasy in adoring the Supreme Being as ‘*The Mother of mothers*’ and feeling how dear each soul is to its great Source, even as the promising, darling child to the discerning loving mother.

In no other Upanishad has the *Personality of God*, in the sense in which we understand the expression in the present day—an aspect that makes religion practical and personal, as concretised in the preceding paragraphs—received so great a stress than in the *Svetasvatara*. In this Upanishad, God and the soul, though their original identity is not denied, are yet clearly distinguished from each other. They are, as already stated in Chap. X, *supra*, compared to “two birds related to each other and friends.” They are sheltered in the same tree: “*One of them, the human soul, eats sweet fruits while the other Paramatman (the Supreme Soul) looks on without*

cating. Man attached to the same tree, is deluded and grieves through want of power. When he sees the other, the adored Lord and His glory, he becomes free from grief."

To the Rishi Svetasvatara, God is a Moral Being, a Person of Perfectly Holy Will, the Teacher, Guide and Saviour of finite souls. Says he, "*That Person is the great Lord, He is the Mover of the heart, the guide to His holy state and an inexhaustible Light. Man is liberated by perceiving Him in the soul, who is the giver of holiness, the destroyer of sin, the Lord of glory, the immortal, the support of all things.*"

Likewise to the Rishi, the Supreme Being, the *Parama Purusha*, his beloved Rudra, is the God of Love, and Grace. He draws close to every heart as the attracting, engaging, enrapturing and winning God. He is our God, near and dear, perceived and enjoyed by us. Into the depths of our degradations He comes. Every beat of the heart, every throb of the pulse, bears immediate testimony to God as being not merely the Transcending God but as the ever Companioning God. Unto the faltering, He is the steadying God; unto the struggling, He is the sustaining God; unto the erring, He is the redeeming God, unto the sinning, He is the saving God.

The reality that God is a Person, distinct from and outside of ourselves, either comes as a wonderful experience, as an unforeseen and matchless grace or as an historical fact, which time and event have made undeniable. The existence of God and His attributes and the beauties and beneficences of nature would be a mere metaphysical talk without a clear perception of God as a person and this would be impossible without a clear understanding of all that is implied in the pregnant personality of man who, as the Upanishads declare, is a partial manifestation or reproduction of the Divine Essence. An abstract God is no God. He may be an idea, an opinion, a sentiment, a moral principle to satisfy the mind,

but until He reveals Himself, is embodied in something which the senses as well as the soul can grasp, religion will never influence life. The incarnation of the Spirit in man is therefore the very first truth of practical religion. The experience of personality in man unfolds, with an undeniable authority the fact that *personality* is a supreme principle in the economy of things, that our personalities are small and dependent that they are over-shadowed by higher personalities and that God as a *Person* incarnates Himself in the personality of the world-compelling men. It is only through man could we ever hope to establish the supreme revelation of the Personality of God.

When animated and quickened by this Divine person *Parama Purusha*, all the powers of man become spiritual powers. The intellect sanctified, becomes prophetic wisdom; the feelings set aglow by divine perception, are turned into profound devotion and the love of man; morality becomes holiness; imagination becomes second sight; faith unveils the world within the world. Everything is discerned in a new light; all nature unseals within its laws new meanings and significances; the universe is spiritualised. When the insight of faith perceives the Personality of God, all the faculties, all the senses, all the experiences, all the worlds, bring their confirmation. God becomes real, religion becomes real, immortality becomes real.

When the Personality of God is thus realised, He visits us, now as the Father and Guardian whose watchful eye is ever on us; now as the loving Mother whose kindness, tenderness, forgiveness, unfailing help, stream into the heart through a thousand objects; now as the faithful Friend who will never desert us; now as the unerring, unfailing Preceptor whose every word is strength and support; and anon as the prompt Judge whose sure decrees none can escape. Then all scriptures become His covenant and all laws His commands and every prophet His message bearer. Then all wor-

becomes a scene where the Supreme Being places man to play his appointed part, He by man's side always. When, therefore, God is conceived as seeing our hearts, hearing our prayers, revealing truths to our souls, breathing strength and holiness into us and leading us on by the hand in the path of spiritual progress, it will be seen that crass dualism of ordinary thought breaks down and a profound unity is recognised between the Divine and the human spirit. Here, therefore, in the Divine nature, we find personality in the truest sense combining the ideas of independence, absolute unity, and permanence which we necessarily attach to it. God, therefore, is not only a Personal Being in the truest sense, but He alone is personal in that sense, **the Parama Purusha.**

CHAPTER XX.

THE RISHIS' CONCEPTION OF BHAKTI OR REVERENTIAL LOVE TO GOD ; ITS DEVELOPMENT IN LATER EPOCHS.

The word '*bhakti*' which means reverential love and attachment to God is nowhere to be found in the Brahma Sutras and it is to be found only in one of the principal Upanishads, the Svetasvatara, the most modern of the ancient twelve Upanishads. But the thing, though not the name, is there in its true nature, devotion to the real Self, to the Infinite, even tender love to the Supreme Being. It appears under the various names of *jnana*, *vidya*, *yoga*, *darshana*, *upasana*, etc., That these processes or movements of the soul have an emotional aspect is recognised in the teaching that the Self should be worshipped or contemplated upon as a dear object. As the Self is nearer than all other objects, it is taught to be dearer than son, riches and all other things. The Brihadaranyaka (Chapter I, iv, 8) says : "*It is dearer than son, dearer than riches, dearer than any other thing, because*

this Self is nearer than all. If anyone says to another who pronounces any other thing to be dearer than the Self, 'What is dear to you will perish,' he is quite competent to say so, for what he says is true. One should worship the Self alone as dear. Of him who worships the Self alone as dear, the dear thing never perishes." The Rishi of the Isopanishad echoes the same sentiment when he says: "*He who sees all things in the Self and the Self in all things does not hate any one for that reason.*"

These texts contain the very first principle of the *Bhakti Sastra*, the Science of *Bhakti*. Yajnavalkya elaborates the same idea in the *Maitreyi Brahmana* of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad in his exposition to his wife Maitreyi of the means to attain true immortality.

"And he (Yajnavalkya) said " Verily a husband is not dear that you may love the husband, but that you may love the Self, therefore, a husband is dear. Verily a wife is not dear that you may love the wife ; but that you may love the Self, therefore, a wife is dear. Verily sons are not dear that you may love the sons ; but that you may love the Self, therefore the sons are dear. Verily wealth is not dear that you may love wealth but that you may love the Self, therefore, wealth is dear. Verily the Brahmana class is not dear that you may love the Brahmana class ; but that you may love the Self, therefore, the Brahmana class is dear. Verily the Kshatriya class is not dear that you may love the Kshatriya class ; but that you may love the Self, therefore the Kshatriya class is dear. Verily the worlds are not dear that you may love the worlds ; but that you may love the Self, therefore the worlds are dear. Verily the Devas are not dear that you may love the Devas ; but that you may love the Self, therefore the Devas are dear. Verily creatures are not dear that you may love the creatures, but that you may love the Self, therefore are creatures dear. Everything is not dear that you may love everything, but that you may love the Self, therefore everything is dear." (Brihadaranyaka Chapter II—iv—5).

The gist of what Yajnavalkya says is, as already stated in Chapter XV, *supra*, that husband, wife, child, our own caste or race and all other things dear to us are so, not for their sake, but for the sake of the Self that exists in them

to which, we assimilate them more or less. Finite objects are indeed more or less sources of happiness, for they are parts or moments of the Infinite but the infinite alone is blissful, the embodiment and source of inexhaustible happiness and, therefore, the only object of perfect love. *The Brahmananda Valli of the Taittiriya Upanishad* says :

“ That which is self-made (that is, self-existent) is verily joy. It is by gaining joy that the creatures become happy. Who could breathe, who could live, if this blissful one did not exist in the heart ? It is this who gives happiness. It is only when the creature gains an immovable footing on this invisible, incorporeal, inscrutable, and self-supported one, that he becomes fearless.”

The most impressive exposition in the Upanishads of the Infinite and his blissfulness is to be found in the *Narada-Sanatkumara Samvada* of the *Chandogya Upanishad*. After a long enumeration of categories of spiritual conceptions forming an ascending series, *Sanatkumara* at last comes to the *Bhūman*, the Infinite, which alone he pronounces to be blissful. He says :

“ The Infinite alone is bliss. There is no bliss in the finite. The Infinite alone is bliss.”

The definition of the Infinite that follows has never been excelled, says Max-Müller, by any since given. The attributes of the *Bhūman* mentioned in the dialogue, namely, blissfulness, immortality, all-pervasiveness, establishment in His own glory, His being the Self of all, and His being such that when He is seen and heard, nothing else can be seen and heard, are most comprehensive. The Rishi says :

“ When one sees nothing else, hears nothing else, understands nothing else,—that is the Infinite. That which is Infinite is immortal, that which is finite is mortal. ‘ Sir ’ (says Narada to Sanatkumara) “ In what does the Infinite rest ? ” “ In its own greatness. In the world, they call cows, horses, elephants, gold, slaves, wives, fields and houses, as so much greatness. ‘ I do not mean this, he said, because, in that case, one thing rests upon another. It, that is, the Infinite, alone is below, it is above, it is behind, it is before, it is to

the right, it is to the left, it is all this." Then follows an exposition in which the Infinite is seen as 'I.' "I alone am below, I am above, I am behind, I am before, I am to the right, I am to the left, I am all this." Then follows an exposition in which the Infinite is identified with the Self. "The Self alone is below, the Self is above, the Self is behind, the Self is before, the Self is to the right, the Self is to the left, the Self is all this. One who sees thus, thinks thus and understands thus, loves the self, revels in the Self, enjoys the company of the Self and rejoices in the Self. He becomes *svarat*, self-ruled; he becomes independent in all the world. While those that know otherwise are ruled by others and live in perishable worlds. And they become dependent in all the worlds."

What is most important in *bhakti* is that the true character of the *Sadhya*, the real object of worship and aspiration, should be clearly grasped. It is therefore most essential that in our strivings after the *true bhakti*, we should see that it is the Infinite such as has been described above by *Rishi Sanatkumara* and not any finite object, however attractive, that is always before us.

Incidentally I may add that this *Narada-sanatkumara Samvada* constitutes the basis of the teachings of all advaitic philosophers of even modern times, as for instance, witness the following exhortation of Maharishi Sri Venkataramana of Tiruvannamalai to his disciples :

"It (the Self) is the easiest Thing to obtain. The *Self* is always in you, around you, and everywhere. It is the substratum and support of everything. You are experiencing the *Self* and enjoying *It* every moment of your life. You are not aware of it because your mind is on things material and thus gets externalised through your senses. Hence you are unable to know *It*. Turn your mind away from material things which are the cause of desires, and the moment you withdraw your mind from them you become aware of the *Self* or *It*. Once you experience the *Self*, you are held by *It* and you become *That* which is the *One without a second*."

As a necessary corollary from the stress laid on the Personality of God in the *Svetasvatara Upanishad*, the *Rishi* insists on *Bhakti* in addition to knowledge as the means

to immortality and supreme beatitude, when he says : "*The Supreme Brahman is sung (in the Vedantas). In Him rest the three (the individual soul, its objects and the mover), and He is the firm support and the unchangeable. Those who know Brahman and are devoted to Him are freed from re-incarnation by knowing Him who transcends the world.*" I may state that the later *Bhakti* movement in India, a most precious heritage of humanity, which achieved its elaboration and consummation in the *Bhagavad Gita*, may be considered to have grown out of the spirit of the teachings mostly of the *Svetasvatara Upanishad*. A deep consciousness of the overpowering presence of God and not merely an intellectual assent to His existence as in the case of a dry philosopher, an oppressive sense of one's own iniquities, an intense longing of the soul for emancipation from the bondage of endless births, the doctrine of Grace and Mercy, with its concomitant realisation of God as the Personal and Forbearing Father and man as the prodigal son, the Parental protection of the One and the filial dependence of the other, may be considered to have emerged slowly and gradually from the teachings of this scripture. These phases of the soul's progress in spiritual life will be briefly dealt with below.

While the philosopher says : "I know God and believe Him to be real," the *Bhakta* avows "*I have seen God.*" While the philosopher says "The Infinite is unknowable, nevertheless, He may be apprehended in consciousness, though we cannot comprehend Him, the *Bhakta* goes further and says : "*God is not only apprehensible in consciousness but I have actually seen Him. Here He is—a mighty Reality. Thought comprehends Him not. He is past finding out. Yet of His Reality. I am most vividly and joyfully conscious.*" Thus while the philosopher is satisfied with only believing that God is not less real than matter and self, the *Bhakta* converts this intellectual belief into a vivid perception and makes it his

daily occupation to see God, discourse with Him, enjoy His company and live in Him. Accordingly, from this initial mutual attachment, grows communion, then inter-communion, and then absorption. This immersion, this absorption of the *Bhakta* in the ocean of God's all-pervasiveness, is the characteristic of Bhakti rapture, a characteristic which we see in advanced stages of spiritual culture.

In the earlier stages of progress in the attachment to God, however, the more the *bhakta* grows in spiritual fervour, the deeper becomes the consciousness of his utter helplessness, imperfection, his uselessness, worthlessness and even baseness and the sense of dependence on God at every step in the march of life. He feels that he has wasted all his energies, all God-given opportunities for spiritual advancement in a foolish flight after the misty meteors of the world, coolly passing by those things which concern him for ever.

He feels that although God is *Sarvantaryami* (immanent in all) and *sarvasakshi* (the All-seeing Witness); He is not transparently manifest to him. It is the scales in his eyes, it is the mist in his mind, it is the darkness in his heart, it is the sin in his soul that has concealed God and His Love. He feels that his miserable, wretched, sinful, ungrateful soul ran away from God, sought lowly pleasures, indulged in base gratifications, pursued sinful and brutish enjoyments. Sin-stricken, heavy-hearted, feeling the enormity of his wickedness, smarting under a keen sense of his own unworthiness, smitten with indescribable remorse, tasting the bitter fruits of his own iniquity, the *bhakta* falteringly approaches the Throne of God's Holiness and Mercy and fervently prays :

"Cleanse me, purify me, chastise me, pass me through any purgatory, draw me through any fire, put me to any ordeal; as thou dost this; may my soul rise nearer to thee. This soul, self-abandoned, comes back to Thee: Pity, take it back. Make me Thy own, absolutely Thy own. I come to Thee to be taken in, if not as a son, then as a slave; if not as a penitent, then as a prodigal. Cast on this unholy wretch, a ray of Thy Holiness and resume him into Thy sacred and Loving Arms."

Feeling his utter helplessness, looking with abhorrence upon the black spots of his past life, the *bhakta* groans to God as under for redemption :

"Who but Thee could feel any pity, who but Thee could spare any compassion for this helpless and prostrate creature? Will Thou neglect me? Will thou reject me? Will thou desert me? Whither can I possibly go? Where can I possibly reside? Where can I possibly shelter myself, if Thou forsake me? I cannot advance any claim, I cannot urge any right that I should receive Thy compassion. The sinner cannot choose; the prodigal cannot demand, the rebel cannot ask for pardon or leniency. I can only appeal and implore. I know, I am sure I am absolutely certain that the penitent sinner, the returning prodigal, the loyal rebel are all Thy children, the children of a loving and merciful Father."

Finding no immediate response to his wailings, the *Bhakta* becomes despondent, begins to doubt even the existence and providence of God and laments as under :

"How long, terribly long, dost Thou roll me in the flames of this tormenting remorse and anguish? Why dost Thou not respond to my wailings? Why art Thou so hard-hearted and pitiless? How and why dost Thou rejoice in the sufferings of Thy children though possessing the supreme power to liberate them from the clutches of sin and its loathsome misery? My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? I am mad with deep despair. Faith is failing me. Dost Thou who art avowed to exist, exist or not? Where art Thou whom the philosophers and sages proclaim as existing in every grain of sand, in every drop of water, in every breath of air, in every spark of fire, in every blade of grass, in every leaf of bush, in every pillar of iron, in every loftiest mountain, in every lowliest vale, in every cloud in the sky, in every drop of dew on the earth? Where art Thou, who from the heart of the desert callest forth the living spring? Where art Thou who kindest the shining stars in the centre of the gloom? Where art Thou who churnest up the nectar of hope out of the deep of despair? Where art Thou who temperest the wind to the shorn lamb and who givest the assurance of succour not unto the firm oak that will resist the gale but unto the frail reed that must needs bow down before it?"

Painfully conscious of sin and yet too feeble to resist it, this struggling sinner, this tortured transgressor, what peace, what comfort, what happiness can he command? But unto him sunk in this deep despair, comes the soothing, the cheering, the revivifying thought, that Thou, the Divine

Father, art sure to help and uplift him. This life-giving thought, that there is a Heavenly Purifier of the fallen, invigorates and rejuvenates this sore-struggling, half-sinking sinner, who thus feels nerved to a new fight with the frightful foes that have so long held him down. That Thou art the All-Merciful One who cherisheth boundless love even for the transgressor, goeth in search of the lost man, pardoneth and purifieth and placeth in the right path him who has sinned against Thee—can any man perceive this truth and not feel impelled to love, adore, and obey Thee with the whole heart and mind, soul and strength? O Thou, the Supreme One, the Reclaimer of the erratic, the Restorer of the lost, the Purifier of the tarnished, the Uplifter of the fallen, the Solacer of the suffering, the Healer of the wounded, the Saviour of the sin-stricken, make haste, come, deliver, protect, save this contrite supplicant.

After a time, the *Bhakta* feels that his S. O. S. of distress has been heard and the *Grace* of the Supreme Being is coming to Him. He vents out his joy and exultation as under :

"I see now a beam of Thy Light, a glimpse of Thy returning grace even in the tears of my penitence. The days of my prodigality are numbered. The processes of my sin are foiled. My wretchedness is bound to go. The child in its helplessness shrieks; in its peevishness kicks; in its perversity blunders. But with every shriek, every kick, every blunder, the child becomes dearer to the mother. 'Here is my darling who specially needs my confidence, my protection',—That is what the mother feels. Unto her, the very sorry condition of the child is the appeal, the demand, the credential for love and mercy. With its filth and dirt, the child leaps into the mother's arm and the mother embraces and cleanses the child. Likewise is the marvel of Thy abounding Mercy and Grace towards the returning prodigal."

The purification, the purgation, the excruciating, torturing test and discipline to which God would subject the *bhakta* are designed only to make him fit for divine acceptance, for, God is so full of compassion that there is no turning away, no saying "Thou art condemned to eternal exclusion." His eternal love, His fatherly forgiving love, takes back the sinner whenever he comes. He is more anxious to save the *bhakta* than the *bhakta* is anxious to be saved. He is more anxious to regain the *bhakta* than the *bhakta* is anxious to be regained. Now the *bhakta* feels that God is the delight of

the heart, the joy of the soul, the light of the eyes, the music of existence, the thrilling dancing vitality of every fibre of his life. Such is the marvellous transformation of the soul through true repentance and prayer.

It will be seen from the above that it is the *bhakti* school of thought that reconciles the Justice of God with His Mercy and proclaims the ultimate salvation of all, the guarantee of God's immeasurable Grace and invincible Righteousness. Repentance will save the sinner not from the punishment due to sins already committed, for Divine Justice is immutable and its decrees irreversible, but will save him from further sin. The moment one has sinned, Justice will rise up and say: "Sinner, thou hast sinned and must be adequately punished." Overburdened with iniquity, his conscience upbraiding him, such a sinner repents sincerely till he is liberated from the bondage of sin. In other words, till repentance has purified the sinner, till the mire and dirt of iniquity has passed through the fire of sorrow, pain, tribulation and contrition, there can be no real emancipation for the soul. Here we see Justice and Mercy acting in unison. The Lord is Father and Judge both. Where the Judge has passed the sentence of punishment, the Merciful Father appears before the sinner and says: "Suffer the pangs of remorse to the utmost measure for the sin thou hast committed; repent earnestly, repent day and night and thou shall be delivered from sin." As the Judge who punishes us for our sins, is also our Father, we drink the cup of retribution, though bitter, knowing that it comes from the Father and contains not poison but the medicine that heals. In God's moral government, Justice makes punishment necessarily and immutably follow the commission of sin. Mercy makes that punishment remedial and inflicts it on the sinner for the sake of amendment.

God's grace and forgiveness do not, therefore, consist in the remission of a decreed punishment but in the reconciliation

with God, in the restoration of the sense of harmony with Him which had been broken. Here I may state that God's forgiveness of us differs in some particulars from our forgiveness of each other. In both cases there has been a loss of harmony and a sense of estrangement through sin. As between man and man, that estrangement is generally on both sides. As between God and us, the estrangement is only on one side, the estrangement is on ours. In man's case, before he can forgive, he has to drive out his resentment. In God's case, there is no resentment to drive out. In man's case, another man's trespass does not make him less irritable through the knowledge that he is himself often a trespasser too. God never trespasses against us, and yet is absolutely patient and unmoved by any anger or displeasure. His love may make Him grieved at the distress we have brought upon ourselves, but He has only to wait patiently, as only a God can wait, for the dawns of that godly sorrow on our part which will tear aside the veil which our sin has drawn between our souls and Him. Our confession and prayer for forgiveness to God is like our confession and prayer for forgiveness to our fellowman, in that it springs out of our love to God, which, by His mercy, we have not wholly lost. Moreover, the perfection and beauty of God's grace and forgiveness is seen in the passionate desire it creates in the *bhakta* to walk before Him with a perfect heart, to take no wicked thing in hand, to do justly and to love mercy. It creates in the devotee a hatred of sin and a longing for true holiness. Its cry is "Make in me a clean heart, O God and renew a right spirit within me". In other words, he upon whom the dreadful justice of God has been executed, not in vengeance but in the light and wisdom of edifying love, he will take reasonable care not to offend that justice again.

It is clear from the above that there is no conflict between God's Justice and Mercy and that His Mercy stands before even the vilest of sinners at all times as a great Reality,

filling him with hope past all description, inviting him to come near the Great Father. Is there not therefore something in the riches of Divine Mercy which is sufficient to melt the most obdurate and stony heart? God's love as delineated in the parable of the Prodigal Son in the Christian Scriptures is not a mere deception and a delusion. Were it so, then religion is a lie, God a deceiver, and Divine Providence the greatest phantasmagoria which has ever cheated man. Far from over-stating, the parable represents only an infinitesimal fraction of God's inexhaustible mercy. God leaves the ninety-nine that are pure in order to find out the one that is wicked. In the words of Brahmananda Keshub Chander Sen, it would be an insult to the Majesty of God's Throne, it would be a blasphemy against Divine Mercy to say that He will wrathfully condemn any sinner to eternal perdition or cast away for ever and doom to ever-lasting punishment any man, simply because he has not accepted a particular dogma or believed in a particular religion.

Unto God, with His persevering goodness and His loving mercy, there is no absolutely lost creature, however atrociously evil. There is ever the dear one yet to be redeemed and restored to the parental bosom. However low, fallen and abject, still the child of God, with all his iniquity, is dear and welcome unto God's sanctifying embrace. God's punishment for sin is not really a punishment in its ordinarily accepted sense. Strictly speaking, the God of Love and Mercy does not punish. He only purifies, renders clean what has become sin-stained and redeems what has been bartered away to vice. Punishment, by whom and of whom? By the Father and of the child? Unthinkable. In God's family there is no punishment but only purification, unless we hold that the goldsmith who purifies a piece of gold is thereby also punishing that piece. All that in the harrowing hour of remorse we name punishment is really God's purifying process. We are being tempered in baths of tears to be made

sound. In the Divine household, there is no outcaste dismissed with : " Get thee away from my sight." There is no disinherited prodigal ; but all are equally dear. " Go thy way and sin no more " is the only charge, of course a heavy charge. Aye, our regeneration is God's own concern. Our God is the God of salvation, not of perdition ; of redemption, not of desertion ; of cure, not of curse.

The Rishis say that a great, good and loving God of Grace is always with us, ever solicitous. Even the vilest of sinners, tainted with the foulest of sins, may yet say to himself : " My God wants me ; He has assumed the responsibility of saving me." Besides, even in the most sin-tainted soul, there is repositied a germ of the Holy Spirit of God. Even as every mass of rock has an ore of some kind within its hard substance ; even as every wild herb has some healing virtue ; even as every sky, however, inclement, sheds some beneficent influence, so, the character of every man holds the divine somewhere. Iniquity absolute, devoid of all touch of the Divine, is inconceivable. However fallen a person, however sunk in the quagmire of sin, we should not fancy that he is lost, irretrievably lost. No, not lost, because in Him there is an imperishable seed of good which must grow and bear fruit in the fulness of God's time. And as observed by Miss Cobbe in her marvellous book, *Alone to the Alone*, even in the condemned murderer of this day, God already sees the future saint of heaven. Jesus with his disciples was nearing a town. They were at the outer gate. There lay the carcass of a dog in an advanced stage of putrefaction. The companions held their noses and said : " How, unbearable the stench !" But the Master observed : " Behold, pearls are not whiter than his teeth." Thus it is we carry hope to the despondent heart and awaken in him who considers himself lost the faith and the aspirations that he cannot be lost. As Swami Vivekananda has said, when you meet a sinner, you cannot do better than gently remind him that he can be,

and is bound to be, a better man. Thus reverencing what lies hidden, what the world only misses or condemns and rejects or what to the eye of flesh appear but commonplace—that constitutes the highest graduation in spiritual progress. With the insight of infinite goodness, God perceives the germ embedded within and brings to bear upon it the cleansing powers of grace ; and there starts the process of salvation. Be he a sinner caught in the act of sin, yet if we probe into the depths of his being, we will discover amidst the abasement of carnal desires, an element, an instinct, that is akin to the Divine. Enfolded in every bosom, there is a germ of divinity so fecund, so productive, that through the Grace of God, it must unfold into the full bloom of a regenerating spirit ; even because God's love is gentle and gracious ; and Love stoops where Righteousness stands stiff, and Love avails, Love prevails ultimately. Why, even His righteousness combats our sins and wins us over to Him. The natural world would not be darker if the Sun did not shine. But Oh, how gloomy, how plunged in Cimmerian darkness, would be the spiritual sphere, if He, the Central Sun of Righteousness, but ceased to shine in the heaven of the heart ! In the sting of pain, in the qualm of conscience, in the shock of circumstance, in the anguish of bereavement, in the isolation of offence, His righteousness speaks, warns, sustains and saves.

In this connection, it may also be stated that it is the Upanishadic conception of God's love and mercy as described above that has been echoed in the Bhagavadgita where Lord Krishna (the Universal Self) assures Arjuna (the individual self) thus : “ I truly promise to Thee that Thou wilt find me, for thou art dear to me ; come unto me as your sole refuge. I will deliver you from all sin ; grieve not.” (Chapter XVIII, 65 and 66).

Our later religious literature, the *Bhakti* and *Prema Sastras*, are all based on the Upanishadic doctrine of the divine love,—God's love for man and man's love for God.

God, who is perfect, is the supreme object of love and reverence, and the finite self, as the object of divine love and the centre of the divine manifestation, is an object of constant love to the aspirant after spiritual life.

Again how God sanctifies the human soul and unifies it with the Divine even through the mighty power of love, how love works magically in bringing about repentance in man, Brahma Rishi Venkata Ratnam gives a graphic description in his exposition of two short poems of Tennyson called, "*Happy the Leper's Bride*" and "*Romney's Remorse*"; For the benefit of the readers, I cannot do better than reproducing them below :

The story of the first poem is briefly this. There was a fine-spirited, young man, by name Ulric. He married a young woman from pure mutual love. On the day of the wedding, they planted a rose bush to commemorate the solemn event. They lived happily together as man and wife. An evil-souled neighbour, a Count, cast lustful eyes upon the young wife. In order to get his wicked wish satisfied, he went and whispered to her that her husband was faithless to her and was wooing his wife and that, therefore, Ulric's wife and himself must conspire to take revenge. At once she became smitten with jealousy. So, in order to rouse jealousy in her husband, who she thought and misthought was wronging her, she allowed the wicked person to kiss her on the brow in Ulric's presence. Ulric's whole life now became frozen towards her. A chill set in between the two, though they could well have cleared up matters by a little explanation. The unhappy relations continued. Losing the charm of the home, he became a crusader as was the general custom in those days, donned the crusader's war-dress, mounted his horse and was about to leave, when, plucking a pair of roses from the plant of the marriage-morn, the woman made up to him and presented them to him. He took them silently, though with a frown, and kissed them and flung them to the ground. She picked up the flowers thus thrown away and kept them as sacred mementos. And he, abroad, went to the Holy Land, fought nobly, won victory and fame, caught leprosy and returned home a leper. And, according to the all too rigid segregation rules of the day, he was removed from society ; and in conformity with the prescribed church ritual, he was taken to the church and there the priest solemnly proclaimed him dead and

flung the mould of earth upon his feet; and he sang the psalm, 'Lord Thou hast liberated me!' because the dead man is he who is liberated from the flesh. But unseen of him, while kneeling beside his bier, the good wife heard it and in her own song, changed the prayer of the solitary *me* into the married *us*: 'Lord, Thou hast liberated us!' The man was taken far beyond human habitation and forbidden not only from coming into human society but even from opening his mouth. So he accepted his severe solitude, none nearing him, none talking to him. But the devoted wife took the old pair of roses and approached him nearer and nearer. He only beckoned and made signs to her not to come near. She says, 'I am not to come near you, because you think my beauty will be tainted and marred by it?' She feels in the warning a bitter touch of reproach implying, 'That beauty which you sold to another, why tarnish it now by my touch?' Yet she persists, 'I will draw near, I have brought our old roses for you. I have long since changed your psalm in the church from the solitary 'me' into the married 'us'. The leper plague is upon you. But it can never mar my beauty. All will be well, if I lose it and myself in the higher beauty which is yours. I come to be by you, united for ever with you as your wife.' The husband is moved; and still he tells her to keep aloof but asks her to fling the roses to him, as he is willing to take them; only, she must not come near, because that beauty which has remained dear as the beauty of a faithful wife must not be tarnished by the leper's touch. But she repeats she has come to be one with him and declares she never loved him more while a young and fair maid herself and she can now have no life apart from his, for she must find her life in and with him alone. Then he beckons her to come a little nearer. She says it is invitation enough and, drawing closer, tells him that, while he was away on the crusade, she was once out in the open with a furious storm blowing over her and she knelt in the storm before the God riding over it and prayed that the blue bolt of the storm might not descend upon the head of her beloved husband; and while she was thus engaged in praying not for her own but for her husband's safety, the old tempter came again and she clapped her hands in open disregard and the thunderbolt descended upon him and instantly reduced him to dust. Thus her soul has been purified through self-abnegation and by the preservation of her husband and the destruction of the tempter. With this, she avers again, 'I must live in, and find my life only with you,' throws herself into his embrace and adds, 'Kiss me; I am come to live and die with you in the name of the everlasting God.' That is a splendid picture of the process of Love—the great sanctifier and

unifier. God sanctifies the human soul and unifies it with the Divine even through the mighty power of Love. Why does He yearn and long eternally to save us? Because He loves us. In our narrow, purblind vision, we turn away from Him. But the day of redemption comes when we plunge into the sacred fount of penitence and come back to be reunited with the supplication, 'I come to find my life in Thee, oh my eternal God, to live with Thee whose touch can give me life.' It boots us little to feel ourselves sad, if we only say, 'I am sorry I have done the wrong thing.' That is a sentiment all too poor. Rather, it must be one of 'I want my God; and no satisfaction can be mine till I have obtained my God.' The contrite wife goes back to the deserted husband, not alone to comfort and succour him, but to redeem and realise herself thereby. And the husband discloses himself to her as a pure and sacred spirit in whom there is no pollution, no taint. It is for the soul thus to go to God with the confession and the supplication, 'I am proud; I am self-sufficient. Take me; absorb me; and grant me eternal existence.' Such is the return offering of love to the beckoning gift of love.

"To turn now to the other story. Romney is an artist. He marries and has a little daughter. But he has heard Sir Joshua Reynolds, the greatest artist of the day, say that marriage mars the artist. And now, under the influence of the master's apothegm that wife and children drag an artist down, he grows indifferent to them. They are no longer objects of interest to him, if at all he thinks of wife and babe. Hereafter, art becomes the sole idol in whose worship he neglects the supreme duty of loving and serving the wife and the child. Leaving the family, he goes away and completely absorbs himself in art for years and years. No thought is wasted by him upon them. In the heavy, enforced widowhood of the wife, the baby so dear to her heart, dies. She, nevertheless, continues to cherish the old love for her husband undimmed and untarnished. He paints many a masterpiece and grows in fame as a marvellous painter. Thus he attains his object in life. But in this monomania, he loses his balance of mind and becomes almost a maniac. Weak, worn-out, exhausted, feverish, half-crazy, he returns to the dear Mary whom he has long since deserted. But he is half-insane and cannot realise the surroundings. He thinks himself to be in a hospital. In semi-lucid moments, he asks, 'Where are my pictures? What is this new, unexpected scenery around me?' Turning to the wife tending him in the homely surroundings, he enquires, 'Are you a nurse hired to attend upon me?' And soon racking his memory, he adds, 'I remember to have seen you in a church years ago.' Proceeding, he says,

'You look so kind that you will not deny my sultry throat one draught of icy water.' The sorrowing wife weeps the tender tears of melting affection. They fall upon his brow; and he thinks them to be ice-cold drops of water shed upon his burning brow to soothe him. But shortly he exclaims, 'Are they tears? Who are you to shed tears?' Then, the consciousness comes back entire, and there is the clear recognition, 'O Mary, Mary,' with the confession 'To you my days have been a life-long lie grafted on a half-truth.' 'Where am I?' he asks. 'If I have ascended the summits of worldly fame, I have descended into the depths of spiritual darkness.' Thus the tears of the forgiving one evoke the remorse of the erring one. Madame Guyon, the French mystic, has said,

'I have no punishment to fear;
But ah! that smile from Thee
Imparts a pang, far more severe
Than woe itself would be.'

Unto the penitent soul, there is, indeed, no punishment to fear. It is all the paradise of at-one-ment vouchsafed through the purgatory of pain and suffering. Accordingly, it is forbidden to say at the Footstool of Grace, 'Oh God, do not inflict punishment upon me.' The irresistible impulsion from within is, rather, 'Thou wilt not punish. Thou art not the offending God that would repel but the inviting God that would cleanse.' Yes; the filth-filled child runs up to the mother. The mother receives it with open arms and with the soothing call 'Come, darling,' and sets about the cleansing, though the child cries the while in impatience. The loving mother who says the impure child must be made pure—not the pure mother who says the impure child cannot be touched—she baptises the child into purity. In Tennyson, it is the tears from the tender wife that evoke remorse. There is no blasphemy, if we add it is not merely the smile of the Mother that evokes remorse but it is also the tears of the Mother that elicit remorse. If there is no anthropomorphism, no materialisation, in giving God a smile, we need not be afraid of giving Him a tear either. The tear of the mother is from the heart of the mother; while the smile of the mother is from the spirit of nature in the Mother. The tear is to awaken; whereas the smile is to resume, to take back and to embrace. Thus awakened into remorse, all his old memory comes back to Romney. He says, 'I never did forget you. Looking upon the pictures of the Madonna with the Divine Child upon her lap, I was thinking of you and your babe.' This is what is called *Darsan*—the vision of the Divine in the human; the graveyard of memory re-

awakened into a vivid experience of the present God. Then, as becomes the second characteristic of the rejuvenated soul, the remorseful artist says, 'Now, I will paint you. My art—my box, colours, tool, skill and all, I dedicate assiduously unto you. I beg the favour of your just giving me a sitting.' And then, he says, 'Less profile turn to me—three-quarter face.' Further on, you get the panting utterance of the soul: 'I would picture you, figure you in myself face.' Thus, too, says the penitent sinner to his God, 'My beloved God, I want Thy full face; do Thou conceal nothing from me.' The next moment, 'A child had shamed me at it. The whole power and skill has gone out of me. I can't paint you. This art thou harlot-like seduced me from you leaves me harlot-like.' Similarly, who can paint God? The more strenuous the effort, the more enlarged and the more baffling in dimensions the Infinite becomes. Finally, 'I am content with being before you,' says Romney. At last, too, comes to the soul the great revelation: 'Why should I strive in vain to paint or to describe, while the vision itself is before me?' That is the vision of worship—ultimately the real reason why the monotheist says no worship is possible except in spirit. Not that the idolater is a sinner and I am a saint; but who can paint, who can symbolise, who can picture the Vision of the Infinite. At last there comes the final stage unto the penitent sinner: 'O let me lean my head upon your breast.' So he finds his peace, his repose in Righteousness. And the conclusion here takes us back to the closing note of the first poem, 'I come to live with you.' The penitent restored to His God, rests in the assured hope that forgiveness reaches up to heaven and thence is reflected to bring shining light to the forgiven. The grace of God, reaching up to heaven, is reflected back as the bliss of God in penitence, because God's light shineth directly upon the darkness of the world. That is what we mean by '*thamasom jyothirgamaya*' (Lead us out of the gloom of the self into the light of the Eternal). As Lowell has told us how Love's forgetfulness is Beauty's death, the artist forgot love, and so beauty—the capacity to realise and reproduce beauty died out in spite of the so-called skill. Again, as love was restored, the little, narrow cells of 'Thou' and 'I', 'I' and 'Thou,' were by the mystic key of Love flung open into the boundless beyond of Heaven's palace-gate. That is the soul's redemption, the soul's salvation. As the artist says in his remorse, 'There is no sin equal to black infidelity. The murderer, the adulterer, is less of a sinner than I; because, if he has lost salvation, he has at least gained something, while I have lost salvation for a mere sketch in paint and colour.' Thus, the true, penitent sinner says, 'No sinner

like me ; no saviour like God.' As two complementary aphorisms in Sanskrit put it, except me where is Thy suppliant and except Thee where is my Saviour in the three worlds of spirit, mind and matter ? As the suppliant in self-suppressing plaint prostrates himself before God, the prostration is transmuted into exaltation ; and the soul can say with the emphasis of a joy of which all other joy is but a faint echo, ' I have found my God.'

. It will be seen from the above that repentance and prayer, the out-pouring before God of the *bhakta's* individual needs, trials, sorrows and longings constitute the very essence of *bhakti*. True prayer, is the unexpressed and hidden spark of heavenly inspiration which rises in the soul and is seen only by God Almighty. The unspoken language of true prayer, no ear has heard, the deep spirit of true prayer no eye has ever seen—an attitude of reverent humility and self-consecration, an attitude of child-like trust and meekness, an attitude indicative of a deep consciousness of weakness and a strong sense of the necessity of divine aid. The *bhakta* prays ; God hears ; God speaks ; the *bhakta* listens and obeys. The *bhakta* rejoices to sing God's praise, not that He needs it, not that he offers it as a homage or even as a confirmation of his allegiance to Him, but wholly because the heart is prompted and the soul is impelled to it. He feels he must sing His name, even as therefrom comes the exalting experience of the vivid perception and the sanctifying inspiration of His holy presence. God seeks our prayer not as the praise-loving God, but as the tender, watchful mother unto whom the lisp of the child is the music of deep affection, the revelation of profound love, the gospel of all-absorbing devotion.

Again prayer is an involuntary craving of the human soul induced by a felt want. It is an appeal to one infinitely higher than man for the grant of a spiritual need of the soul. As it springs from a pressing sense of an urgent want, it is but natural that the soul should turn and look to a power above for help and guidance. The hungry child turns to

its mother for food ; the hungry soul turns to its benign Mother for spiritual food. The beggar writhing under the inclemencies of weather knocks at the hospitable door ; the sinner smarting day and night under the compunctions of conscience knocks at the merciful door of God. The seeker of knowledge resorts to teacher for instruction ; the soul in quest of wisdom seeks the feet of Him who is the Supreme Teacher of all. The patient implores the aid of the physician and the sick soul implores the aid of the All-wise Doctor, who alone can cure the dreadful malady of sin. In all these cases, the action is instinctive, spontaneous, the natural outcome of a deep-felt want. The child, the beggar, the student or the patient does not act in consequence of elaborate and accurate reasoning, but from the promptings of native instinct. Nothing can successfully prevent him from seeking the aid ; likewise it is impossible to prevent the yearning soul from supplicating the help and guidance of Him who has begotten the soul and has been mercifully showering invaluable blessings upon it. Both are acts of spontaneity ; and set reasoning cannot influence them materially either. When the *bhakta*, conscious of sin, brings himself to the position of a little child and looks tenderly towards the Father of Infinite Mercy, then, whether the language of prayer is used or not, whether the inward longings are expressed or not, that child-like soul has already commenced to realise the blessings of true communion with God. Let us not therefore fall into the illusion that prayer is not necessary, because God is Omniscient and knows our wants already and that our prayer cannot be answered as the laws of nature are fixed. Yes, God is Omniscient. He knows that we require His light. But does He not know too that we need physical light ? And yet has He not so arranged and ordained that though the sun shines everyday, it is indispensably necessary that we should open the windows of our rooms in order to

ow the rays of the sun to enter freely and dispel the gloom which enshrouds us?

There is nothing more certain in the whole biography of man and history of the world than this fact of prayer and its answer that supervenes to it. In trial, in temptation, in weakness, in pain, in sorrow—in all those great testing circumstances which try a man what stuff he has in him—there is a new law, strengthening, uplifting to be won by simply putting forth the soul to God that he may touch and heal it. It is true that His counsels are wiser than man's and that He will do for us better than we can ask or think. But for all that, He has created and ordained it one of the laws of the spiritual universe, that when we reach out our hands and lift up our voice to Him consciously and from our hearts seeking to come into touch with Him, then new floods of His Holy Spirit flow over us from Him with their wonderfully illumining, illumining, and uplifting power.

In the religious life of man prayer is a nurse in infancy, a comrade in manhood, a consoler in sorrow, a healer in affliction, a companion in adversity. Given up by helpless physicians and wept over by sorrowing relations, we find in prayer the only true friend that stands by and imparts hope and courage. Prayer is the lovely angel that fetches the flowers of peace and spreads them on the death-bed. It is prayer that inspires the trust and faith to depart swan-like and sweet. It is prayer that ferries the soul across the unknown main and lands it in the haven of the great Beyond; and it is the prayer that ushers the suppliant spirit into the august presence of Him who is immortality itself.

True prayer betokens unreserved submission to and unaltering dependence on God and unswerving and unwavering trustful toil wherein the humble sower sows and the Sovereign Reaper reaps. This may be illustrated by a short story. It is said there lived two hermits, secluded in their small single cell; and they both felt that to feed their little lamps

in the night, they needed oil ; and each planted a tree from which to obtain it. As the plants began to grow, one of the hermits would incessantly turn to God and say, " Grant light unto my plant, lest it should be colourless and sapless ; and next, send down ample showers, for without them it would droop ; and then mix up the various manures in due proportions, that it be fed alright ; and again vouchsafe that, season after season, the right measure of shelter and protection be extended to it, lest it should perish for want of requisite care and attention ! " The other hermit planted his sapling and said, " Lord, that I might have a gleam of light in my cell, even as a token of Thy glory, I have planted this : O let it grow under Thy care. I shall not presume to prescribe for its up-bringing, by naming its needs to Thee ; I shall humbly render unto it such little services of care as Thou promptest, and trust to Thee for its growth and the fulfilment of its object. " The story goes on that the plant of the hermit who, day and night, begged for specific gifts of God and besought the many acts of providential protection, refused to grow and soon perished ; while its neighbour flourished and realised the object of its existence. Thus it is ours to plant and God's to grow ; ours to till and God's to harvest ; our's to serve and God's to bless.

The grace of God is ever nigh to all who feel their weakness and their need. God is full of compassion and mercy, and will not bear the bruised reed or quench the smoking flax, but gently lifts up those that are cast down and fans into a flame the smouldering embers of holy resolve. He bids us do our best that we may strengthen within us those faculties for goodness which are already there : but He bids us also seek His grace and the sweet influence of His Spirit, that in waiting upon the Lord " we may renew our strength and run and not be weary, may walk and not faint. " Yet, in this arduous and tremendous conflict with temptation without and weakness within, many and many a soul would

break down in sheer despair of victory, if we had no certainty; not even a strong hope, of ultimate success. Our hearts could not stand the enterprise, our courage would give away, and every fall would leave us more helpless than before. To prevent this collapse, to make patience and perseverance possible to us, God whispers the needed word of hope, the promise of final success, in response to our prayers. And this He gives by opening our eyes to see His infinite and inexhaustible love; by enabling us to see that out of His love alone were we born into this world, and for the sole satisfaction of His love are we preserved and disciplined and chastened by so much sorrow and conflict with sin.

He tells us we were born to be good, to grow up at length into His likeness, abhorring evil and loving goodness, being good from a deliberate choice of it, not from an incapacity to be otherwise. He tells us that the path of life leads to Himself and *that* path we may make short or long, smooth or rough, blissful or baneful as we please; but whatever be our errors, our wanderings, our criminal sloth or slumber, our falls and our entanglements, we must reach Him at last. As already stated above, there shall be none lost, none for ever cut off from finding Him, none too weak or faint but what He will breathe anew into their souls the breath of life. This truth once grasped and felt is enough to rekindle hope in the despairing breast and to fill with high courage the heart of the most faint.

In his swan-song, Arthur the sovereign saint, whose life pictures the holy war waged by soul against sense exclaims;

“For what are men better than sheep or goats,

If knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer.”

It is indeed this lifting up of hands with the lever-power of prayer that marks man out from his fellow-creatures. It is prayer that in Martineau's felicitous phrase separates man 'not by mere gradation but by a virtual infinitude, from

other races here" and in fact carries him "beyond the classification of species altogether." If, as Max-Muller has observed, language—articulate speech—is our Rubicon which no animal can cross, it is incalculably truer that prayer—"the converse of the human heart with its Maker and Mentor" is our pathway to that Realm of Realities into which no animal can trespass. Man speaks, because he is noble in reason; man prays because he is infinite in faculty. Speech is man's reaction to the creation; prayer is man's response to the Creator. Man takes in the world of sense with his speaking capacity; man transcends that world with his praying strength.

At all times and in all climes, under all conditions of existence and along the whole line of his activities, man has believed in and cultivated the spirit of prayer. Childhood with its innocence, youth with its hope, manhood with its dutifulness, age with its insight, all have uniformly prayed. Prayer has been the language of the universal petition of weakness for strength, of want for relief, of struggle for endurance, of penitence for pardon, of ignorance for wisdom, of doubt for assurance, of power for right-doing, of faith for grace. In one word, prayer has everywhere and always been the spontaneous expression of that reverence which is the apex-virtue of man.

Far from asking for any alteration of law according to which God governs the universe and the destinies of individuals, prayer for spiritual blessings—spiritual strength, spiritual wisdom, the light of His countenance, peace, purity, righteousness and truth, is itself the fulfilment of a law. That law is the absolute self-surrender of the human will to the Will of God, the Will that wills for ever the eternal weal of the whole creation. In praying for faith, love, humility, resignation, holiness and strength, the aspirant surrenders himself to the Divine Will,—wishes for just those

things which God wishes that he should have—and thus removes the chief obstacle to his acquisition of these things, namely, his own rebellious will. The contemplation of God's power, wisdom, love and holiness becomes delightful for its own sake and not for any personal gain it will bring to the worshipper. Man's will becomes so thoroughly attuned to the Will of God that the vows of man are exalted as the purposes of the All-Wise and his resolutions are tempered with the Will of the Omnipotent. In other words, prayer is realisation itself, for, in it, the son feels that the Father is greater than himself and that he is at one with Him in the unity of will and that the greater originates the less, includes the less, absorbs the less.

Let us also remember here the story of *Dronacharya* and *Ekalavya* in our grand epic, the Mahabharata, which signifies how the adoring disciple acquired mastery in the art of archery even through soul-deep devotion to the image of the inspiring *Guru*. The image only symbolised the vitalising process whereby the essence of *Dronacharya*, embodied in *Ekalavya*, grew and expanded through ardent devotion to the *spirit* of the Master. So also, even more so beyond words, all that is true and pure and holy is infused through the inspiration and realised through the grace of the Living God, as a result direct from, as a response ever more to, the worship of Him in spirit and in truth. Therefore we must pray with trust, pray without ceasing, till the practice of prayer terminates in that rapt communion with the True, the Wise and the Blissful which leaves no residuum of the *me*—the little self—save the ecstasy, the beatitude, of holy enjoyment. Thus will come true the glowing words of a spirited writer as regards the potency of Prayer, that it can 'turn flesh into spirit,' "metamorphose nature into grace," fetch earth up to Heaven.

As the Object of Worship stands revealed to the worshiper, filling his own existence and transcending it, that darkened his vision heretofore and chilled the spring of his emotions is removed, the flood-gates of feelings are opened and an outburst of reverence, admiration and love goes up towards the God of *Satyam*, *Sivam* and *Sundaram*: the True, the Good and the Beautiful and gives the soul foretaste of heaven.

Again in the perfect prayer, there is never any question as to whether we can persuade God to give us anything. God gives Himself to us as the sweetest gift and he desires that we should enjoy Him; the soul receives the gift with reverent joy, saying "Thou art my God." When we can say that, there can be no thought of meaner gifts.

We know that a gift is enjoyed only as the enjoyer forgets himself in its enjoyment. Who can enjoy a thing and yet be conscious of himself? Thus, as God gives Himself unto us, we enjoy Him as a gift only as we forget ourselves, annihilate ourselves as separate entities, in the enjoyment of God. Sweet-souled Sa'adi has said: "As I was entering the garden the friend said 'Fetch me, as you return a few flowers from the garden.' I went in; I enjoyed the garden. When I remembered my friend's request, I found myself outside the garden." The memory of a separate entity, the recollection of another object—that was incompatible with the enjoyment itself. As enjoyment ceased, memory came up to the surface. In the enjoyment itself he could not remember. In remembering the friend, he lost the enjoyment. It may here be noted what that sainted Lady Sufi, Rabia, said: "God, If I seek Thee from fear of hell, throw me into the hell; if I seek Thee from desire of heaven, keep me from that heaven; but if I seek Thee for Thy own sake, Oh, unveil Thy Face!" This is verily the highest, the noblest prayer given to man as God's child to offer.

It will be seen from the above that to the *Bhakta*, not only are the feeble attractions of the world all lost, but the self itself is annihilated in the sweets of mystic devotion. This annihilation of the self is to the *Bhakta*, not merely self-denial or asceticism. It is not merely the renunciation of carnal pleasures and temporal enjoyments. It is not even the highest form of poverty. It is not mere sackcloth and ashes. It is something more. The sacrifice it enjoins is far more radical and deep. It is the sacrifice, not of selfishness, or self-aggrandisement or self-glorification or self-indulgence or self-interest or self-will, but of self itself. The *Bhakta* hates self as an abomination and an evil in itself. He would lay the axe at the root and is not content with merely lopping off the branches of the tree of corruption. His process is not to destroy each passion by moral struggle and warfare but to root out the false self, the origin of all evil, by unconscious absorption in God, the Higher Self. Instead of confronting single foes and vanquishing special vices, he goes valiantly into the very heart of the enemy's citadel and tries to overthrow it completely. It is only thus that he annihilates the stubborn separate self. His ethics is not negative and destructive, but positive and constructive. His ideal of moral and spiritual perfection is not 'No-sin,' 'No-sensuality,' 'No-pride,' 'No-worldliness,' but positive godliness. He seeks not retirement from the world but submission into heaven. He will have no other salvation than the conscious absorption of 'I,' 'Mine' and 'Me' in God. And this absorption he endeavours to bring about by constant contemplation. So thoroughly does he concentrate his attention on the reality of God's Infinite Spirit that his little phenomenal self gradually wanes and fades away like the borrowed and reflected radiance of the moon before the rising sun. When the real comes, the phenomenal disappears. It is quite clear now that there is no power in the self but it is of God, no wisdom, no love, no holiness but

it is divine. How very lofty and holy, how serene and joyful is the condition of *Bhakta's* soul, when fully entranced, he sees God in himself and himself in God.

Again, the *Bhakta's* cry for union is inspired by the fire of love. The fire can be quenched only by union with God, the Beloved. This love is sweet madness. It exalts the earthly body to heaven; it makes the very hills dance with joy; its rays mount up to the firmament; its purifying virtues render the soul a burnished mirror to reflect Him. The soul is perceptible only as it bears that reflection.

But how is this progress of the soul towards or unto the Lord to be attained? Sankara says through five processes or rather stages and illustrates them as follows:

As the full-grown native seed of the ankola tree clings, as it falls down, back to the parent stalk; as the needle feels drawn to the magnet; as the chaste true wife is embraced to the beloved of the heart; as the creeper twines itself around the sustaining stem; and as the ever-eager current flows ceaselessly towards the sea singing the one song 'I am for the sea,' so the soul seeks repose in God and finds its fullest existence in the contemplation of and devotion to Him.

I reproduce below Brahma Rishi Venkata Ratnam's illuminating exposition of these stages in the soul's ascent to God.

"The *ankolam* is said to be a tree with this peculiarity, that immediately its seed falls to the ground, it clings to the base of its trunk almost instinctively. The needle-magnet principle is a familiar phenomenon. You remember Carlyle's application of this comparison to the irresistible attraction between Boswell and Johnson. Place any amount of rubbish in between; and yet each will be drawn to the other. The mariner's compass always points to the lodestar of all lode-stones—the polar star. Then, the way in which faithful wife and cherished husband cohere to each other is a familiar idea. Next, there is the idea of the creeper turning itself around a branch or another creeper; that also is well-known. You know how such have become sacred objects, like the mistletoe. Again, the flow of the river towards

the sea has been the theme of innumerable poems. You may recall that famous passage in Rabindranath Tagore's *Sadhana* in which the river, even from the beginning when it starts on its career, is described as leaping forward with the one song, 'I am for the sea.' All these mean one thing in common—the irresistibility of attraction. The *ankola* seed will go nowhere but must go back to the foot of its own stem. The needle can never divorce itself from the magnet. The true wife can never think of the possibility of separate existence apart from her spouse. The creeper not only depends for its vitality on, but owes its very life to, the tree around which it entwines itself. Science tells you of parasites in the vegetable and in the animal kingdom. And it is a fact of actual experience in either of these spheres that if the 'host' dies, the parasite dies also. The latter derives all its nutrition from the former. As for the river, it is no river that does not go into the sea but exhausts itself before it reaches the goal.

All these examples are brought into use by the great sage to illustrate how there subsists an interminable, immortal relation; beginning with proximity and closing with identity, between the human and the Divine. These are not to be treated as mere variants of the same thing. They present rather the several stages in the ascent of the soul to God. *Bhakti* is not 'Oh God I am in Thee; I am in Thee.' It begins with the consciousness of God and ends—if it may be said to know any end at all—with absorption in God. And all the intervening stages in this progress are beautifully illustrated by the series of similes before us. (1) Why the *ankola* seed goes and touches and, as it touches it clings fast to the foot of its own stem, as though by instinct, we cannot tell. Probably, there is something in the trunk or some innate urge in itself. Anyhow, this marks the prime, initial elementary stage. (2) There is the next step at which a mutual relation of conscious approximation to each other starts. Something there is imbedded in the nature and substance of the two objects which draws the needle to the magnet. (3) Proceeding further to the *sadhvi* and the *vibhu*, we come to a reciprocity in which—unlike in the earlier stages of a powerful pull on one side and passive obedience on the other—each finds her or his being in love of the other. Illustrative of this we have any number of beautiful stories both historic and mythical. You have heard that story of a mutually loving couple in which, referring to another couple, the husband says: How faithful must have been that wife! When she heard her husband had passed away, she went and drowned herself in a well'. Gently, observes the wife, 'Yes; that was very good, indeed. But it is not the perfect ideal.' 'How do you mean?' 'Why, that woman should

not have needed the act of going and throwing herself into a well in that position.' The husband wanted to make a trial, went a-hunting and got up a story that he was killed by a tiger. Says the messenger sent in charge of the report, 'Madam, your husband has been carried away by a tiger.' 'Aha!' she exclaims and instantly drops down dead on the spot. *There* is the completion, the climax, the perfection of conjugal adherence. Nanak, the Sikh *Guru*, has a fine illustration. Set a mixture of milk and water upon the fire; not a drop of the milk shall be touched or spirited away until the last drop of the water has been evaporated. That is the mutual devotion of wife and husband. (4) Then, there is the creeper and the stem relation in which the one thrives only so long as it is in touch with the other. (5) Lastly, there is no real river at all until it reaches and pours itself into the sea; and thus the *jeevatma* exists not at all but in the *Paramatman*.

These distinct stages of advancement in *bhakti* are otherwise represented by four familiar keywords in our national vocabulary of spiritual life. (i) There is the *salokyam* of the domicile living in the same territory and breathing the same atmosphere. (ii) Next, there is *sameepyam*, that is, getting into nearness, vicinity, proximity. (iii) A higher state is *saroopyam* in which the external, symbolic form itself presents some similarity. You remember the wise observation that he who has seen the son has seen the Father. Yes; there must needs develop at least some features of resemblance between the one and the other. Even friendship is found to lead to a number of such similarities, in respect of such outward characteristics also as movement and deportment, between friend and friend; and most of all is this the case between the truest of friends, namely, husband and wife. There is thus a similarity in spiritual form between the Deity and the devotee. What is prominent in God becomes the characteristic as well of the soul; so that the saying of Jesus receives abundant confirmation in that the Father is reproduced in the Son. (iv) Highest of all is *sayujyam*—inseparability, clinging together; being yoked together. It is a profound saying in the Koran—that in which God is reported to have said to Mohammad and, through him, to say to all else, 'We have created thee for Our delight.' A certain Sufi has observed 'The God who loves me is *me*; and I, who love God, am *God*—two forms but one soul!' And then comes the thought-arresting, significant statement, 'He who has seen me has seen God; he who has seen Him both Him and me.' So are God and man intertwined or interfused or intermingled. Again, the flow of the river into the sea is ordinarily called absorption. We have queer notions about it, as

when we say it is like salt lost in water. What the sages mean is that it is the highest beatitude wherein there is no consciousness except the consciousness of God—not annihilation in God but complete occupation with God, being wholly taken up with God. It is not the loss of self-consciousness but its expansion into cosmic consciousness where man is still living but as an all-absorbed entity enjoying the beatitude of God. Tennyson, in his *In Memoriam*, tells how two companion souls merge into oneness with each other :

“ Since we deserved the name of friends,
And thine effect so lives in me,
A part of mine may live in thee
And move thee on to noble ends.”

Loosing oneself in the love-light of God—that is absorption : not the complete wiping out of the sense of ‘ I ’ but the completion of the finite ‘ I ’ in the recognition of the Infinite ‘ I ’.

The first of the several stages in the pilgrimage of the soul, Sankara, with all the great teachers, calls *salokyam*—the enjoyment of the company of the Deity. The next, *sameepyam*, he says, is *namasankeerthanam*. *Saroopyam*, he calls worship. Finally, *sayujyam* is *dhyanam* and *kaivalyam*—bliss and beatitude. There is nothing after it, as even in ordinary talk we use *kevalam* to signify the idea ‘unrelieved’. To put the whole thing in another way. In the first stage, there is the sense of awareness of God, as in the *ankola* seed seeming to know its own resting-place. After that comes attraction, as of the needle and the magnet. Next, attachment as between the wife and husband. Then, adherence, as of the creeper to the parent stalk. Lastly, absorption, as of the river in the sea. Sankara gives a hint elsewhere why it is that *bhakti* springs at all in the human breast. That is because, he says, God has planted in it the sense that it is made for His *kreedā*, rapturous enjoyment. All the creatures of the universe are His ‘*kreedam-rugah*,’ sport-animals—not in the bestial sense but in the fascinating sense of, say, pet-fawns or darling *kohils*. For the Divine all-inclusiveness, all beings are animals of enjoyment. Hence the significance of that verse in Blake’s poem which says it is the same Hand that has shaped the fiery heart of the tiger and the meek heart of the lamb—not the one for cruelty and the other for tenderness but both to be unified into one arena for Divine enjoyment. As God has thus created the universe for His *kreedā*, so the response must come from man. If we may try, though inadequately and imperfectly, to denote the progress of this response, in Sanskrit terminology, it starts with *rakti*, then evolves into *bhakti*; and when the response

of *bhakti* infuses itself into *rakti*, there is *vimukti*—not redemption into aught like the Euclidian 'point' which has no 'parts' but freedom from restraint, being always at home with God, one with God. We talk of 'atonement' in the secular or the theological sense; but it is far from that; it is atonement in the spiritual sense of at-one-ment. A certain Persian mystic has said, 'I have come to see the two as one.' And how? 'Because,' he says, 'I seek the One; I like the One, I see the One; I call upon the One.' So, seeking, wishing, seeing, and calling upon—all this is about the One, the only One, among the many—the One at the beginning and at the end, outside and inside. So, too, sings the modern poet of *The Higher Pantheism* :

"And the ear of man cannot hear,
and the eye of man cannot see;
But if we could see and hear this
Vision—were it not He?"

That is the culmination, the fructification, the *summum bonum*, of *bhakti*—all included in, embraced in, fused into One."

As a necessary corollary from the practical realisation of the various stages of the soul's ascent to God as described in the preceding paragraphs, there follows the doctrine of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man; and the *Bhakti* school of thought insists upon this doctrine being made the guiding rule and the motive power of one's life. He who is acknowledged by many as the Creator, the King, regarded by some as the Preserver, feared by most as the Destroyer, is to us the Father, trusted, loved, looked up to like an earthly parent in all conditions, in all difficulties and thus glorified in each act of each day,—nay in all life and death. The principle of Brotherhood is the sure sequel to the principle of Fatherhood. It proclaims that one blood flows uninterruptedly in endless circulation through all men, as the water of the globe is all one sea and truly seen its tide is one. Children of the same father must necessarily be sisters and brothers. Call God Father, you must call man brother. Says the Persian Poet "the sons of Adam are all limbs one of another; for they are of one substance, issuing

out of one Spirit and children of the one parent." Forsake man, the brother, and God, the Father, is forsaken.

It has been said of Dr. Johnson that, driving out on a very rainy day, he felt pity for a poorill-clad woman plodding along the road with her baby in arms. He took the mother and the child into his carriage, but sternly forbade all crooning and caressing. After a while, the woman forget the injunction and began to fondle her darling with the usual 'nursery nonsense.' A warning was growled; a brief pause, and a second offence and the lexicographer opened the door and turned out the woman and her senseless jargon. He could pity the woman, but could not tolerate the *mother*; and as he rejected motherhood he ejected all humanity. In the same fashion, we would have the Creator, but would leave out His creature; and as we reject the creature, we eject the Creator. 'Love me, love my darling,' demands woman the mother; 'Love me, Love my darlings', enjoins God the Parent.

The term brotherhood of man is an all-inclusive one; in its vast scope it gathers the whole human race. It admits of no exceptions on whatever ground. None, be he ever so unknown, humble, despised, can be shut out from this circle—a circle as broad as human life. Lives no man of any colour, country, creed, caste, condition, character, but has full claim to the total rights of the brotherhood of man. In the breadth and beauty of human brotherhood, all differences of dogma or doctrine, all barriers of division and separation, all surface distinctions of rank and position, all the paltry pride and prejudice of race and denomination, must be sunk out of sight. Men who looked upon each other as aliens, strangers, not unoften enemies, who disliked, distrusted, deluded by each other, feared, ill-treated, made tools of, made toys of each other, should forsake such attitudes and look upon each other as members of the same family, bound to cherish, help, edify, elevate, sanctify each

•

other by the over-mastering impulse of love, till all become kinsmen and the whole world becomes one spiritual fraternity for the worship and adoration, in direct unveiled communion of spirit and in the unflinching service of truth, of the one Supreme God, the Eternal, Unsearchable and Immutab Author and Preserver of the Universe, our Maker and Master Mentor and Guide, Parent and Saviour.

In the conjoint spiritual worship of the brotherhood of *Bhaktas*, man approaches, appreciates and embraces man as a God-illuminated soul. Therein soul sits with soul in a sacred ring, soul moves with soul in a holy circle around the one in whose Light they dwell, by whose Love they live. Therein soul hails and rejoices in soul for the sake of the Mother Divine of all human souls. Therein all souls speak one language—the language of the heart, of which the scriptures of all climes and times are but a translation, the language of love, the language of child-like simplicity. God bless them all.

Again in the more advanced stages of *Bhakti*, the intense devotional attitude towards God is that sweet ecstasy—that enchanting *madhuryam*, in which He is the “Spouse Divine of the human soul.” It is a conception at once direct, attractive and inspiring, not distant awe, indefinite familiarity or dependent trust, but voluntary and cheerful self-dedication. Day in and day out, the *Bhakta* revels in the joy of this sweet relationship thus :

“ O Thou the Sweet One, the Charmer of my heart, the Captivat of my soul. Thou hast meant me to be the dear bride, the chosen spouse, the consecrated consort of Thine own Holy Self. Such is the irresistible, the in-drawing power of Thy charm that the ground under my feet slips, my strength only conspires with Thy purpose and the heart is seized as if by one storm of rapture and I lose myself in Thine ever-expanding, all-encircling embrace of love. Thou hast made me created me, not for myself, not for others, but for Thine own Self. Thou hast said unto me “ You are mine.” And the end and fulfilment of my being lies in re-acting to that holy offer and invitation as

crying forth unto Thy Spirit. "Lord of my heart, I am Thine, wholly Thine." The heart knows no content, the soul feels no happiness, the eye aches with weariness and every sense droops under the oppressiveness of separation from Thee. How a spring opens from within and a halo encircles me without, when with repeated persistence, there comes the inexplicable experience of oneness with Thee! The whole universe fills with a new glory and a new radiance and becomes resonant with a new music and a new harmony; and to the single tune of Thy love and beauty, the heart within and the world without dance the eternal dance of Thy praise. Blessed be Thy Name."

Madam Guyon expresses this sweet relationship as the marriage of the finite with the Infinite soul. Says Francis Newman, "A man may begin his religion in awe and fear, subdue it into philosophy and poetry and gain personal attachment to the Lord as Father; but he perfects his religion when he makes his soul the woman-soul and God, the Lord of the soul." And this is how Newman beautifully distinguishes woman's love for the husband from all other kinds of love. Under the latter, the command is: "Thou *shall* love the Lord." Love is there a duty. Under the former, it is: 'Thou *mayest* love the Lord.' Love is here a delight, the priceless privilege of the heart, the complete rapture of the soul. Truly if love is the master-passion of man, it is the very life-blood of woman as stated by Brahma Rishi Venkata Ratnam. To her love is life—life and love are inseparable. You cannot maintain the creeper if you cut off its living contact with the soil below through the trunk. In other kinds of love, at most, we cannot but be dependent; but in woman-like love, we love to be dependent, not out of helplessness, not through prudence. Independence is out of the question—it were an outrage. The woman who is a true wife is a widow the moment she has been separated from her Lord. Such true love continues to show itself in various ways. Among us, Hindus, the wife shall not utter the name of the husband. What is at the back of this observance is that there is no name to utter. We give names when

there are two or more similar things ; we do so to distinguish and identify them. Wherein does the need lie for a name when there is but one thing of its kind ? Hence it is that Carlyle has said, the first cloth the soul is wrapped in is the name ; the soul comes into this world without a name. The husband has no name—he is the only one of his kind. In Seetha's *Swayamvaram*, the several princes pass before her and Seetha names them in order. But when the turn comes to Rama, she merely bows her head. There is no name to be uttered there. And they who come upon the image of God in countless forms at every turn seldom take the name of the unnamable upon their lips, and that, even because, He never is absent from their hearts. Further, after a faithful genuine marriage there can be no thought of divorce. As already stated in Chapter II, *supra*, the whole progress of civilisation has been summed up as the uplifting of marriage out of the mire of physical enjoyment on to the mountain-top of spiritual monogamy—monogamy not merely of the body but also of the soul, not enforced by the world but embraced by the spirit. This impossibility of separation is born of the vital principle that where once love has been, there love is bound to be for ever. We know that if the husband's heart is occupied with the wife, he will have an instinctive disinclination to turn away from her. If the wife is truly devoted, it is impossible for her to feel that so and so is more winsome than her husband. What is it that Savitri said “ *A woman's heart is given away only once and not twice.* ” Where the heart is, there also the body must be. The father may frown, Narada may predict, Yama may frighten, Hell may gape, Darkness may threaten, but the heart is devoted. Leave the corpse, she cannot; but the soul is going, and where the heart is, there also the body will be. Likewise, when the human soul and the Supreme Soul love each other, they love for ever. The wedlock tie of union between the finite and the Infinite knows no severance. The best proof and

vidence of this, is our immortal life and love through eternity.

The test of true *Bhakti* is that the soul rejoices to be alone with the Alone. The "Lord is my joy" says *Bhakta*. Because He is the Lord of my Soul. I have to be dependent upon Him. His beauty enraptures me. His sanctity enthral me. His harmony evokes the latest harmony in my soul."

This absolute dependence on God is testified to in very wonderful ways. When a fanatic threatened to kill Saint Chaitanya with a sword and asked him to name his protector, he unhesitatingly answered 'Hari'. That name was enshrined in his heart and dissolved in his blood. This is true dependence. It is natural and inborn. Another homely instance. There was a little boy and in his simple heart there arose the desire to note down every instance of kindness received. On every page in which he recorded the day's experiences, he would write: "A did this kindness; B showed this sympathy; C was thus serviceable." He would, however, place at the top of each page the simple words "*Mamma*" and "*Papa*"; for he observed that they stood at the head of every day—they pervaded the whole course of life during the day, and they entered into every act and enjoyment of the day. It is the true spirit of *Bhakti* which, on the living tablet of the heart with its ample record of joys and sorrows, engraves at the top 'God the Parent.' It is not an isolated act, a specific occurrence, but a pervading sense, a permeating consciousness, an indwelling experience, through all details of life. God is not merely the on-looker but the Participator. The ideal of *Bhakti* is not to uphold the exalted throne of God but to reach down the heart of God into the murk and mire of our sinful life and make the process of Divine Sanctification prevail even in us. God will not only rectify and redeem but so transmute and

transfigure that nothing survives except the grace of God.

Accordingly, in this advanced state of devotional attachment to God, the bhakta feels that it is wrong, nay sacrilegious to call Him by any name. To him, the Supreme Being is *nameless* (*namarahita*), devoid of name, even as He is *formless* (*Ruparahita*) devoid of form, and he thinks it sheer madness to presume to name Him, the Nameless. He feels that no name is needed, no description is wanted to tell our hearts what He is unto us. The dear one of the heart needs no name. The love and devotion of the heart seek no designation, no description. The lover and the beloved fuse into the oneness of ecstatic enjoyment. And thus not only face to face, but heart in heart and spirit within spirit, we dwell, beyond the need, above the possibility, of naming and designating Him. He never needs naming. He that is distant unto the heart—he has got to be named with a name. With His indwelling and immediate presence in us, how superfluous it were to give Him a name! In fact, how oppressive is the sense of fear, lest, in making a futile attempt to name Him we should lose the quickening touch of His Holy Spirit! All names, however carefully selected, are a veil and a mist between Him and us. He, the Nameless, unnamable, most dear one of our hearts! As we fold Him to our hearts and as we feel drawn to His heart, what intrusion that we should word our joy, name our bliss? We feel even now that He is enshrined in us as the dearest, sweetest, mightiest, holiest One, the absolutely perfect One and we bow down before Him in reverent joy. He is the eternal, the Omnipresent, All-in-all. *He is the One; that is His only name.* And yet, filled and surcharged, as the inpouring sense of Truth and Wisdom, of Goodness and Love, of Beauty and Holiness, of Peace and Joy, surges into us, we cannot but speak out, cannot but utter forth, in however inadequate a manner, the ecstatic delight of our hearts. And thus, we call Him the True, name Him

the Wise, designate Him the Good, proclaim Him the Loving, acclaim Him the Sovereign, embrace Him as the Lord. Not broken up but magnified and glorified, He remains the same and yet ever new, the lasting and yet ever emerging, the Ancient One and yet the momentarily remanifested and reincarnated God. He thus fills not merely the long span of generations and ages but the little details of every heart-throb and every pulse-beat.

In this connection I am prompted to give an episode from the life of that wonderful saint Meera Bai, a Rajput Princess, but unlike princesses in general, touched by Divine Love and exalted above all thrones to that seat of glory where the soul feels that not for the monarch's throne, not for the rod of authority, not for the mine of wealth, would it give up the invaluable honour of saying, "I am God's." Wholly absorbed in God, the Princess would often in her room be engaged in conversation when alone; and her husband, a powerful, manly, self-respecting chieftain, unable to understand the mystery, thought she was speaking to some third person. At last, he broke open the door, rushed in and asked "Where is he?". He found none there. "Where is he" he asks. "Where is the other person that you were talking to? Where has he escaped?" And the Princess answers "He is there before Thine eye"; but he could not see Him. He could not bear his wife being in company with another person. She had to go away. When God possesses the soul, the tearless weep like Augustine, the proud fall prone, men retire into the wilderness like Gautama, or dance like David, or foam in the mouth like Mohammed, or become blind like Paul, or ride out into the darkness never, never to return to the worldly life again. So Meera Bai left Rajasthan and went to Brindavan. The most renowned of the saints at Brindavan was Rup Gosai; and to him, she sent word saying "I should like to see Gosai and pay my respects to him." Rup Gosai was of a profoundly

devotional spirit ; but he had not outlived the general limitations of an orthodox saint and therefore said, "Woman and coin cannot approach me." "Rup Gosai," said the Princess, "What is he that he should say he is a male? He is a *woman*. In Brindavan, *Sri Krishna* is the only male. If Gosai thinks himself a male, then he has slowly and cunningly got into the Lord's place in the bridal chamber, and must be driven out."

Again it is said of the *Gopis* that they would dance and dance in a ring around Sri Krishna because they so loved him and rejoiced in their Lord. And rightly so, for theirs was a joy that could not be contained. Their whole life was music and dance. Sri Krishna was to them like a central mirror and in him the *Gopis* beheld not alone their respective but also one another's reflections. This rendered each dear to the other ; and for his sake, they rejoiced in one another's company, thus forming a circle of co-worshippers. Thus has God to be realised as the centre of the sacred ring of worshippers, realised not only as the God of each one but also as the God manifest as all else beside.

Brahma Rishi Venkataratnam's graphic exposition of the doctrine of *Bhakti* in his famous "*Message and Ministrations*" by a reference to the lives of *Bhaktas Gajendra* and *Prahlada* of our national tradition, the two universally cherished episodes of devotion, makes an illuminating reading. I make no apology for reproducing below his soul-stirring observations for the delectation of the reader :

"*Gajendra Moksham* is a veritable *Divine Comedia*, in which the Heaven-illuminated poet *Potanamatya* unfolds the mysteries and the miracles of *Bhakti*—the mysteries of the ways and the miracles of the grace of God in the beatification of man. Gajendra typifies the soul snared in the noose of the senses—revelling in pleasures, slipping into the quagmire, struggling for extrication and invoking intercession. The proud monarch of the vernal woods heedlessly strays into an alien element and is held in bonds by the lord of the transgressed domain. A life-and-death conflict prolonged over weary years, ensues.

His unaided powers completely worsted, and his mind quite distracted by biting regret for indiscreet trespass, the captive wistfully casts about for succour. Whither shall he turn, to whom shall he resort for relief? With penetrating psychological insight, the poet-seer sets forth the entire process of this spiritual struggle—the painful awakening, the hard self-straining, the frustration, the prostration, the supplication, the rejuvenation, the redemption. As yet, it is mere regret, not repentance—only the sense of injury to self, not of wrong to the Lord. The mind, however, turns shortly towards God—again not to confess guilt but to elicit aid. In sublimest metaphysic set to the melody of sweet verse, he betakes himself to the praise of the Deity whom he would adore and serve. But in the harrowing hour of spiritual tribulation, poetry or philosophy is but a make-shift substitute for religion, the soul's intimate converse with the Over-Soul. "Fancy" observes a Sufi, "The madness of the man who, within full view of the blood-thirsty lion, still loiters *outside* the castle, shouting pious ejaculations. "You are my safety, my shelter, my protection, my strong-hold; I take refuge in you, in you I take refuge!" "Fool, flee for thy life, rush indoors, if thou wouldst be safe and secure." The voice is ringing with classic phrase, but the heart is writhing with an aching void. In the midst of the full-throated pean, Gajendra collapses with an anguished moan. "He that is reported to be everywhere and accessible to all petitioners—exists He or exists He not?" Let us take note that this is not the mood of saucy denial or of crazy doubt; it is the dazed infant's cry amidst the gloom which has veiled the Mother's face. "Where Oh, where is He of whom they postulate, that He is available unto all, high or humble, that He protects the meek and the lowly, that He turns His eye of compassion on all that approach Him in straits, that he listens to the laments of all that carry their afflictions to Him? Will He not hear, see, mind, draw nigh to this forlorn 'one?" From cheery praise to heart-splitting groan, it really means for the sin-smitten soul one deeper dip into purgation and thus one closer step to redemption. The situation is unutterably excruciating; annihilation itself would be mercy! Gajendra is stupefied like one engulfed into a dreary chasm—above starless, around breathless, underneath bottomless. But it is evidence of Divine Mercy that in the spiritual as in the physical world the darkest moment of night ushers the first glimpse of dawn into sight. Whisperings from witnesses around and intimations from the 'storied past' behind—God in Nature and God in History—are sure to shed a gleam through the gloom, an etherial ray from the heavenly flame—which points to the secret door opening inward, out of the dungeon

into the shrine. The 'reported' God and the 'recorded' God prelude the 'realised' God. Gajendra is thus vouchsafed *Iswara sannidhanam*,—the touch, the thrill of God in the soul. 'The sleeping springs are awakened'; the frozen fount thaws with the returning of warmth. Inference yields place to intuition; the Cosmic 'All' becomes the Psychic 'Mine'; the style of address changes from He and Him to Thou and Thee; the soul's approach is not through studied praise from a distance but through spontaneous supplication at the Foot-Stool. "With energy exhausted, with heart sinking, with senses swooning and body drooping; knowing and owning no haven, no refuge save Thee, I bring my soul's agony to Thee; and it befits Thee, it is Thy prerogative to pardon the prostrate penitent; Thou, the Supreme One, Thou the Fountain Head of Bounty and Benediction, haste, protect, save." In the dispensation of Providence, 'confession' and 'absolution' synchronise to the very moment. Instantly, the darkness dissolves, the bonds break, the enemies vanish; and in the golden dawn, with a matin song, the saved one is seen nestled at the feet of the Saviour. Gajendra exemplifies one type of worshippers or devotees—the sinner saved or rather the strayer reclaimed. Against him stands forth that shining pattern of the other type, that peerless paragon of devotees, the immortal *Prahlada*.

"Gajendra and Prahlada furnish an impressive parallel in the study of God's variant ways in fulfilling Himself. They are, so to speak, the two sides of the one shield—Gajendra, the side of slime-stained silver which is seven times tried in the blast-furnace before it is burnished into the mirror of Divine Mercy; Prahlada, the side of pure gold which no acid of 'the world' can corrode and no fire of the 'flesh' can consume. From Gajendra to Prahlada it is the soul's ascent from the deep-eroded glen to the sky-piercing peak. Prahlada is the chosen vessel, the consecrated chalice, for the spirit of godliness. His ante-natal vital-plasm itself is impregnated with holiness. Filled with the unforgettable, he forgets all else. The cardinal principles of morality, humanity, humility, purity, charity, veracity, amity, are in him, not merely touched by emotion into uplifting ideals, but quickened by devotion into spiritual fertilisers. He bears all the time-honoured marks of the God-possessed—soliloquising and sobbing by himself, singing and laughing with inner transport, now leaping up in ecstasy, anon stock-still in absorption. His domicile is on those shining table-lands to which our God Himself is moon and sun. He habitually moves amidst, is invariably accompanied by those empyrean sights and ambrosial airs—those celestial visions and seraphic voices—that eternal effulgence, of which all the lights of the world are an

irradiation, and that universal Harmony in which all the sounds of the world are attuned into a song celestial. His soul has undergone, as Francis Thompson describes it, "The heavenly magnetisation by which it points always and unalterably towards God." He is the incarnation of that sanctity which according to the same great mystic singer, is 'genius in religion.' Squared to this supreme spiritual strength is his God-assigned task in life. His heaven-ordained mission is, not merely to confute the erring unbelief which denies God and pronounces worship as inconsequential, but to convict the arrogant egotism which defies God and denounces worship as self-abasing. Invulnerably panoplied, as he fancies, by a heavenly boon against assaults of all imaginable powers and potentates, Hiranyakasyapa assumes the God and challenges his son to vindicate his faith in one higher than the world-controlling father. He ruthlessly subjects the son to every conceivable mode of torment. But the malignant agents of ferocious persecution—flame or flood, stone or steel, hunger or hemlock, cannot scathe or quell the devotee of *Hari*. Humiliated and infuriated, the demon-king demands ocular proof of the persistently proclaimed *Narayana*. "Where exists, in which quarter is to be spied, that phantom of which you incessantly prattle in a servile tone." "For a certainty," answers the God-illuminated One, "*Iswara exists as the one eternal Reality; with a clearness that cannot be missed by any seeing eye, He is manifest everywhere; why this superfluous search here or there? Away with all doubt whether here He exists or there He exists not!*" This categorical answer is driven home with the 'Everlasting Yea.' "The Encircling One is implicit, as the ultimate Truth in all." Let us note, by the way, that Prahlada does not argue with the acumen of a philosopher, but he asserts with the authority of the seer. Again what mine of meaning is comprised in that appellation of the Most High, *Chakri*! It denotes the circum-ambience, the love-embrace of the Deity; within which the whole universe rests ensconced. Stung to madness by this undaunted assurance of the youth, the heaven-challenging '*asura*' rushes forth, sword in hand with the cry 'Disclose thy *Hari* in this pillar of iron, or fall by my sword' The serene answer to this mortal threat is, "*From gods to grass-blades, He permeates all, indubitably He is the Indweller of this pillar; Him you shall behold now and here.*" How the inspired singer of this divine lay sends a sanctifying thrill through our souls with the profound observation that as Prahlada thus proclaims the Immanent God, the entire Universe stands, through its myriad denizens, translucent with Divine Immanence! From all quarters, through all avenues, this holy light of an All-permeating Personality floods in upon the awe-inspiring scene; "the confession of

the lover " observes a Sufi exponent of *Lailiva Majnu*, is confirmed by the voice of the whole world ; to the prayer of the lover, all mankind cries *Amen* ! The God-defier has no foot-hold in a God-in-dwelt world. Hiranyakasyapa hits with his haughty might, but reels and sinks to the ground with the supernal rebound. It is a law of the spiritual world that blind fury is hurled headlong by its own unbridled momentum. Prahlada, the vision-seer, stands vindicated. Nor is the God-defier annihilated—that would not be god-like. Forceful egotism implies, goes with, a developed intellect and a vigorous will—themselves qualities of no mean merit. Egotism excised, the residuum is the Lord's. Such is the divine process of conservation. What erring mortals live and do, the God of grace will within Himself make pure.

" Gajendra and Prahlada, then, stand for the two main classes of worshippers—both *Bhaktas*, both devotees ; he who is brought into worship and he who is born into worship—he who proves God's all-saving goodness and he who proclaims God's all-sanctifying holiness—the misguided straggler divinely recovered and rehabilitated and the unflinching standard bearer divinely habited and honoured. This brief study of the two typical *bhaktas* imprints on our souls the commanding conviction that God's eternal design of salvation is all-inclusive and that it is enjoined upon us to subserve that design. The great responsibility is reposed on each soul to labour, through worship, and service, to win the whole world for God's Kingdom."

It will be seen from the above that the *Bhakti* school of thought first inaugurated by the Rishis and later on developed by the succeeding generations postulates a relation between God and man which cannot be adequately expressed by words representing human relations. It is closer than that of father and son, sweeter than that of husband and wife. It is something to be felt and not described.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE RISHIS' ENJOYMENT OF BLISS IN GOD.

From what has been stated in the foregoing chapters, it is clear that the Rishis actually saw God with the inner vision of the soul as the bodily eye apprehends colour, as the bodily ear apprehends sound and enjoyed His deepest

and sweetest company. They were ever in constant contact with God, heard Him immediately in the voice of conscience, saw Him immediately in spiritual meditation, felt Him immediately in the solemn awe and the deep peace of the soul. They found their enjoyment not in the fleeting, perishable, monotonous pleasures and delights of the physical body, but in the enduring, imperishable, thrilling raptures and ecstasies of the celestial spirit in the sacred moments of meditation and communion, worship and adoration, which were characterised by deep devotion and ardent unselfish love, love for love's sake without the hope of reward or recognition. Even as the instinctive bird is an ascetic devotee, wholly surrendered to the infallible direction implanted in its nature, thoughtless of the morrow, though environed with a thousand dangers sure of its uncertain food, clothed by His unseen Hand, cheerful, ever deluging the wilderness with the sweetness of its song, the Rishis literally took no thought of the morrow, fixing their unswerving faith in God's eternal, all-ruling and all-pervading Providence and believing firmly that all souls that struggle and aspire are sheltered beneath the white wings of His Holy Spirit, not a single life being left out even for a moment from His Divine protection.

To their eye of reason, faith or spiritual vision, by whatever name we may call the highest stage of knowledge and enlightenment, even what is called the material world, the world of space and time, of colours, sounds, tastes, smells and touches, of the objects of everyday use which surround us, was spiritualised and became the sanctuary of God's Living and Loving Presence.

How did the Rishis approach and enjoy their Brahman? They approached Him with the offering of a grateful heart, the honeyed sweets of their enthusiastic devotion, the fragrant flowers of their intensive love, the soul-enrapturing frankincense of faith and piety. Over-powered by His Mercy,

Goodness and Grace, they would forget themselves in His enchanting Presence. That was verily their Heaven where there was no more separation and estrangement from the Divine Mother, no more disunion and duality, no more sin and impurity, no more misunderstanding and misery. With Him, a prison would be a rose garden and hell itself would be heaven. Without Him, roses and lilies would be flames of fire.

The Rishis rejoiced every moment in His *bhajan*, in the ecstasy of the praise and the glorification of Him, the Lord, not in the mechanical fashion of striking the cymbals and raising the voice but in the pure spiritual mode of stringing the instrument of their hearts and sounding the conch of their souls. Their hearts throbbed and leapt in communion and their souls swelled and danced with the rapture of Divine companionship every moment.

The Rishis revelled in His enjoyment with their *ashtan namaskarams*, the obeisance of all their faculties, the adoration of all their powers, the devotion of their whole existence, not the servile submission from fear, not the prudent and calculating praise for profit, not even the grateful acknowledgment and avowal of indebtedness and obligation but truly and purely the devout prostration of reverence and love. So, with all the faculties and all the powers incessantly growing and expressing themselves in and through them, they adored Him. With all their intuitions and endeavours, with the history of the ages, with the minstrels' chants and the artists' 'witcheries,' they adored Him. With their eyes they adored Him; with their ears they adored Him; with the messages that the eye receives, they adored Him; with the blessings that the eye realises they adored Him; with the truth that the eye perceives, they adored Him; with the bounty that the eye enjoys, they adored Him; with the radiance that the eye loves to dwell upon, they adored Him. With every sweet and charming word of sympathy, with

every holy whisper received into the soul through the portal of the ear, they adored Him. Aye, with every other sense in them, they struck up a universal chorus, a song celestial of praise and a hymn heavenly of glory unto Him.

Unto Him with their duty to Truth, unto Him with their quest for Wisdom, unto Him for the fulfilment of their desires, unto Him as the response to His Love, unto Him as the radiance of His Peace, unto Him as the fruit of His Goodness, unto Him as the embrace of His unity, unto Him as the shrine of His Holiness, they bowed down again and again with the humble offering of their over-flowing love, intense reverence and deepest gratitude.

As the God of Grace, they glorified Him ; as the God of Mercy, they embraced Him ; as the God of Love, they clung to Him ; while as the God of Righteousness they bowed before Him. Thus they worshipped their Blessed Brahman and Sweet *Satchidananda* with their mind's covenant of faithful, earnest quest of Him, with their heart's covenant of single-eyed, passionate love for Him, with their conscience's covenant of dauntless, selfless avowal of duty towards Him, with their soul's covenant of undivided, pure and holy adoration unto Him, with their body's covenant of willing, cheerful service unto Him. As they worshipped Him, they felt Him so near and dear, so charming and engaging, so irresistibly winning and wholly absorbing, that they lost themselves in Him.

Thus absorbed, the Rishis realised His Divine Spirit, His knowledge, Love and Holiness everywhere in space and the universe became to them a veritable garden redolent of sweet and ambrosial odours. God's burning presence made all matter divine and rendered the earth heavenly and converted the whole universe into a vast burning bush, so that all Nature was aglow with His divine radiance. Inorganic matter seemed to start into life and mute creation, hitherto hopelessly speechless, began to speak. The sweet rose, the

huge tree, the smiling field, the gently-flowing brook, the lofty hill, the deep blue sea, the canopied azure sky, all spoke. The sun, the moon, the stars, the clouds that descended in genial and refreshing showers, the beasts of the wilderness, the fowls of the air, the fishes of the sea—all spoke. Most marvellous eloquence on all sides. To borrow a Biblical expression, it seemed as if a pentecostal shower of inspiration came down upon nature and quickened all creation into eloquence and life. Thus, the dumb creatures and the so-called lifeless objects—they too danced and participated with the Rishis in the hymn, the symphony, the celestial harmony of God's worship. Aye, the whole universe was wonderfully attuned into a united hosanna in praise of Him.

To the Rishis, their Living Brahman was not only the burning fire that brightened, quickened and animated all nature around but was also a sacred lamp in the niche of every heart and the sacramental flame on the altar of every home, as explained by Raja Rishi Pravahana Jaivali in his allegorical doctrine of "*The Five Fires*" in the *Chandogya Upanishad*. "The altar on which the sacramental flame burns," is, according to the Rishi, "the world itself, its fuel the sun itself, the smoke his rays, the light the day, the coals the moon, the sparks the stars". The fire burns from day to day. We cannot put it out. It is an everlasting fire which fills all space and time. It is no supernatural fire but, in the modern philosophical language, only the aureole of the Brahman's Ruling Will-Force, His irresistible Energy, His all-pervading Beauty ranging from the smile of a snow-drop to the sublimity of the midnight sky, from the grandeur of genius to the glory of noble character. It is the Effulgence of the Ruling King, the Light of the Divine Mother who reigns always and everywhere.

It was in their deep meditation and communion that the Rishis realised and perceived the sublime truth, the

truth of all truths: "*The Infinite alone is Bliss. There is no Bliss in the finite. Where the Infinite is seen and heard, nothing else can be seen and heard.*"

Theirs was the meditation and communion, which was a God-ward attitude of the soul to receive influences from spiritual fountains of power—an attitude which was a certain openness and receptivity, whereby every sense and every faculty became an inlet from the gulf-stream of Divine Life—an attitude of sensitiveness to every touch of the Spirit—an attitude in which they never thought of *getting* anything but were only conscious of *becoming* something, their beings being exalted, and their natures enlarged.

Theirs was the worship and adoration which baptised them in the holy waters of repentance, fed them on divine bread, made them see, hear and touch divinity in all objects, recognise divine science in all knowledge, walk with a Divine Friend, rejoice ever in a Father's sweet and ever-present Reality, and above all to see Him in all things and all things in Him.

Theirs was the worship and adoration which even when they were absorbed in multifarious engagements and arduous struggles made them realise an inseparable spirit-union with the Supreme Being by attuning their will to His; which, even when their life was flung into the most stirring activity or the sorest trial, made their union with Him know no disunion, their association with Him know no dissociation, their affiliation with Him know no disaffiliation.

Theirs was the worship and adoration which culminated in a life of absolute identification with Brahman, a life not only under His eye, not alone in divine companionship, not merely in unswerving devotion and unreserved dedication to Him but a life in Him, in-dwelt and encompassed by Him in His Bosom.

Theirs was the worship and adoration which envisaged the throb of love, the looking up in admiration and the vow

of devotion of the human soul for its "*Spouse Divine*" and which prompted the devout supplication that the purposes of Omniscience might be revealed to the eye of faith and that the will of the worshipper might be broken in to the ways of the Lord.

Theirs was the worship and adoration which was the spontaneous outpouring of divine ideas and celestial emotions exhibiting the sacred halo that betokens a transfigured soul and breathing the sweet perfume that bespeaks a regenerated heart.

Theirs was the worship and adoration which sought no earthly gifts but received God Himself as "The Sweetest and Sublimest gift," a heavenly boon against which "*all the world is nothing, all the creation counts for nought*," a gift which they could deal with in any way they pleased, now approach Him as Father, then embrace Him as Mother, again trust in Him as Friend, anon draw on Him as Treasure, at once abide in Him as the Asylum and ever bless Him as their Heaven:—a gift which as the mysterious *Kamadhenu* gave them whatever spiritual blessings they wanted, be they truth and wisdom, purity and holiness, strength and stamina, company and comradeship;—a gift whose value is incalculable, joy inexhaustible, strength indefatigable, hope irrepressible, prospect of happiness illimitable, life-time eternal.

Theirs was the worship and adoration which was at once the verification of their hope and faith, their ideals and aspirations, the end and fulfilment, the achievement and triumph of their life and which resulted in their not merely seeing the Blessed One with their spiritual eye—*divyam chakshu*, but in actually touching Him, touch thrilling with the *Holy Touch*, heart flowing into the *Divine Heart* and the soul mingling with the *Supreme Soul*.

Theirs was the worship and adoration which was not the 'propitiation' of an Almighty Power, not the 'bending'

of a compelling Force or an iron Will, not the 'homage' of fear to the supremacy of an inexorable law, not the 'submission' of prudence to a benevolent tendency, but a direct conscious communion, a simple child-like converse between two Beings—the sympathy of thought, the harmony of affection, the unity of design, the confluence of will and the bond of holiness between them and their Brahman.

Theirs was the worship and adoration which looked upon the whole creation of God as one undivided kingdom, His creatures as one undivided family, His children as one undivided fraternity, His saints as one undivided congregation and even His sinners as one undivided expectant band of penitent worshippers.

Theirs was the worship and adoration which cast them into the hands of the Supreme Being in complete self-forgetfulness, in utter self-abnegation, in absolute self-surrender and made them throb with the joy of restoration and feel transported with the ecstasy of re-union.

Theirs was the worship and adoration which was limited by no sectarian conceptions, dimmed by no mask of image or effigy, diverted by no oblation or offering, tainted by no life-destroying sacrifices, tarnished by no bigoted rancour, but fragrant with a sober, orderly, religious and devout spirit and fruitful in promoting the contemplation of God, the union of man, and the great virtues of morality and piety, charity and benevolence.

Theirs was the worship and adoration which consisted in not merely offering to their Brahman and feasting their eyes with the traditional *harathi* of the camphor flame but in living and rejoicing perpetually in the *Presence of the Universal Harathi*, with the expansive firmament as the *plate*, with the blazing sun and the reflector moon as the *lamps*, with the twinkling stars in scattered spheres hanging as *clusters of pearls* around, with the soft breezes of the South

as the *ever-wafting fans*, with the ever-blowing winds burning *fragrant incense* at His altar, with the sweet forest flowers dropping as *offerings* at His Feet and with His resplendent glory *sung by the uncaused harmonies of the universe*.

Above all, theirs was the worship and adoration which led them to perceive the profoundest truth that the final end of all discipline, social, moral and spiritual, in fact, the destiny of the human soul, was the attainment of an uninterrupted consciousness of unity with the Supreme Soul, with a relative difference and not of absolute undifferentenced unity with the Supreme—a state characterised by a complete disappearance of egotism, in which God is seen as All-in-all, by a vision of all things in God and God in all things, a state of perfect enlightenment, a state of a direct perception of the “*Satyam, Sivam, Sundaram*,” the True, the Good and the Beautiful, a state of unmixed bliss and unspotted holiness in this and the next life.

Living perpetually in His Divine Presence with their hands ever clasping His all-guiding Hand and their eyes ever directed towards His All-seeing Eye, swimming in the ocean of His Divine Bliss, breathing the fragrance of His Divine Grace, drinking the nectar of His Divine Love, and, tasting the fruits of His Divine Communion, the Rishis were filled more and more with His Divine Inspiration, till they were made and shaped into His Divine Image, till they felt no desires save His desires, till all that was theirs was washed away, till nothing remained of their own self, till all that was His became theirs.

Thus in profound gratitude, they proclaimed the Victory, and sang the Glory of the Supreme Ruler, the Sole Master, the Eternal Sovereign of all.

CHAPTER XXII.

CONCLUSION.

From what has been stated in the foregoing chapters, it will be seen *that the Rishis of the Upanishads, the seers of ancient wisdom, the hierarchy of Indian spiritual worthies whose central principle, the master passion, the driving power is God-vision, proclaim a God not of tradition, not of rhetoric, not even of inferential conviction, but of direct sight, the sublime Consciousness, the indwelling Spirit, the vitalising Life, the illuminating Light, the inspiring Oracle, the sanctifying Grace,—the direct vision, the actual seeing, the rapturous touching of the all-permeating and all-transfiguring, all-embracing and all-fulfilling, all-absorbing and all-transcending Spirit that encircles the Universe with a halo of celestial glory and transports the soul with the raptures of heaven.*

They beheld Him with the vividness of direct perception, as the only Reality, the vital Substance of the whole creation, the bed-rock Basis of the entire Universe, the primal Source of all that is, holding in eternal order and coherence the complete structure of the cosmos.

To trace the lineaments and study the ways, to follow the foot-steps and bow to the will, to imitate the purposes and reproduce the nature—in a word, to realise and fulfil oneself as a projected emblem of the Divine Spirit is their one prevailing theistic ideal. Hence their advocacy of spiritual worship, their passionate pleading for a devout and pure life as incomparably superior to the most engrossing ceremonialism, clogging symbolism and enervating superstition.

The Upanishads proclaim a religion that offers to the intellect an explanation of the universe and pointing to the heaven of heavens, responds to the most eager of its questions—a religion that offers to the conscience a law claiming

authority to regulate every act, every word and every sentiment,—a religion that offers to the heart an absolutely perfect and Love-worthy Being as the object of its worship and adoration,—a religion that announces that man is pilgrim in the voyage of life, not a random way-farer, not a aimless wanderer, not a party in a caravan or in a military raid or even in a scientific excursion, but a member of the eternal choir to sing the song of God ;—a religion that seeks the enthronement of the Supreme Spirit in the hearts of all—a religion that declares that life is not a dream nor is it a nightmare torture, but is a vision, a glory, that life is from eternity to eternity not only a wakeful and watchful journey but a rejoicing and truly transporting pilgrimage.

The Rishis make manifest in their teachings no less in their worthy lives absorbed in spiritual *Sadhanas* (exercises) the all-exclusive yet all-embracing reality of the Supreme Spirit-God, transcendent and immanent ; the all-engaging and all-unified variegations in the effulgence of the Divine attributes, the ineffable yet ineffaceable unity-and-difference between the One Absolute and the manifold of relative existences, natural and spiritual; the multi-myriad manifestation of cosmic energy and soul-evolution as in the vision beatific and above all the infinite worth because of the immortal destiny, of the human self, awake or asleep.

No religion with any pretension to spirituality sets forth as distinctly as the Hinduism of the Upanishads the immanence of the Spirit of God as the life and glory of nature proclaiming unequivocally that the substance of God unfolded into forms by His spiritual self-action constitutes the universe and that there is but one glory, one beauty, one power, one life in all the worlds and that belongs to the Paramatman.

The Rishis proclaim *a religion of humanity* which unites and blends all other religions and makes one the men whose hearts are sincere and whose characters are true and good and harmonious, whatever may be the deductions of their minds.

or their external profession—a *religion of humanity*, which cannot perish in the overthrow of altars or the fall of temples, which survives them all and which, were every defined form of religion obliterated from the face of the world, would recreate religion, as the spring recreates the fruits and flowers of the soil, bidding it bloom again in beauty, bear again its rich fruits of utility, and fashion for itself such forms and modes of expression as may best agree with the progressive condition of mankind.

To the myriad ills of the human race, the sovereign remedy, according to the Rishis, is an ever-expanding faith in a wise and loving God—neither a cloistered faith that scorns and shuns society, nor a busy care-worn faith that assigns the leisure hour to a hurried worship, nor the prudent faith that imports a God to watch a truant world, nor yet a speculative faith that prefixes a creator to a law-governed universe ; but a living faith in a direct vision of His in-dwelling Glory and a personal communion with His immanent Spirit.

The Rishis proclaim the eternal verity of the religious sense, the undivided unity, the unconditioned infinity, the unalloyed spirituality, the unrivalled supremacy, the unparalleled wisdom, the unfailing love and the unstained holiness of the Deity, the essential unity of divine truth, the inexorable uniformity of divine law, the inviolable right of spiritual freedom, the impartial universality of divine inspiration, the increasing glory of divine vision, the inevitable fluctuations and varieties of religious expression, the imperative duty and the incalculable worth of spiritual worship, the mutual fulfilment of faith and service in love, the whole-souled faith in an all Perfect God and a whole-hearted love for an ever-expanding humanity. The Rishis proclaim the profound incomprehensibility and the sole omnipotence of the Supreme Being. The Rishis declare God alone as the object of worship and obedience, His worship alone as the way to beatitude, the inseparability of pure morality from

true worship and the inalienable right of every individual soul to approach and to adore, in reverence and in praise, the Almighty Author of all.

The Rishis proclaim love to be the final purpose of God's Universe, love of man for man in an all-embracing brotherhood, love of man to God as the profoundest and loftiest of human affections, both of these springing out of God's own love of love and delight in love and in particular His ever-flowing love for the children of men.

The Rishis proclaim that we have within ourselves, if we properly interpret and wisely trust our own faculties, incontrovertible testimony that we and the world in which we live are the off-spring of God, made of His own essence, that He is our Father, that we are His children, that He cares for us and loves us, that we may enter into actual communion with Him in adoration, meditation and prayer, drawing from that communion, peace, gladness, and moral strength and that He will bring about in the end the triumph of good over evil, of righteousness over sin.

The Rishis declare the three-fold principle of God-Head (*Sat, Chit, Anandam*) beyond which no possible conception of divine nature, ancient or modern, eastern or western is possible. The first, as stated by Protap Chunder Muzumdar, is the force whereby God holds His own Being and gives being to others; the second is the force by which He has intelligence and gives intelligence to others; the third is the force whereby He has love and joy and confers love and joy upon others. The first is Existence, the second is Reason, the third is Joy. The first means the reality of being or creation; the second is the reality of intelligence in all things made; the third is the reality of love or joy. The above three names of God, *Sat, Chit, Anandam*, correspond to this spiritual analysis. The Rishis also name the first as *Brahman*, the second as *Paramatman*, and the third as *Bhagvan*. *Brahman* means "He who is great and makes

hat is great"; *Paramatman* means "the Supreme Spirit from whom all intelligent beings have sprung and who dwells in them"; the third is *Bhagvan*, which means "He to whom belong all the resources, all the forces, all the wealth of the worlds, and who incarnates Himself in all great men." Accidentally, we may recollect that the Vedas deal with that self-revelation as manifested in natural laws and objects; the Upanishads deal with the soul and intelligence of man; and the Puranas deal with incarnation and dealings of God with mankind. These three forms of our national scriptures furnish almost a complete picture of the God-Head.

Tolerance and sympathy with other religions is the very eye-note of the Upanishads. For, in the very act of reaching, refining and expanding one's head and heart, conscience and soul, God's truth which is gentle and plastic as ice, takes an impression of the features peculiar to the person. No two persons are the same all round; and Heaven's boundless wisdom, while retaining its high integrity and main identity, seems to bend and adapt itself to the needs of each man. It is said of Charles V of Spain that having abdicated the throne and entered a convent, he used to amuse himself by clock-repairing. This noon he sets all the clocks exactly to the same minute; the next noon no two of them agree with each other! "Thoughtless man I was," says the Emperor, "that I, who cannot make two clocks go alike, hoped to make all people think alike." Fluctuations, differences and varieties of religious ideas are therefore inevitable. Hence the manifest obligation of tolerance and sympathy.

As observed by Brahma Rishi Venkata Ratnam, toleration, with reference to its sources or moving considerations, is of three kinds: (1) the toleration of powerlessness; (2) the toleration of indifference; and (3) the toleration of faith. The last-named type believes and rests upon the belief, that, however pointed or marked the differences, they are no more

than passing phases or temporary accretions, and that at the core, at the vital centre, there is a homogeneity, a harmony, of nature, which manifests itself in kindred hopes and aspirations; and this belief alone begets true toleration. It springs not from inability, not from non-interference, but from dispassionate equanimity, be the other man your adherent or your antagonist. Such toleration becomes a supreme duty even for the reason that God Himself adopts this attitude towards us. His is always the serene, tolerant method of evolution, from within, of the capacities of our common human nature; not the rude, intolerant method of employing a super-incumbent will from without. Thus and thus alone is sweet harmony ensured also between soul and soul. Sadi, the Persian poet-moralist, tells us a story that Abraham, the Hebrew Patriarch, received a wandering stranger who had sought refuge and shelter during a stormy night. As they sat to dinner, Abraham asked his guest what religion he professed; to which the stranger gave the reply, that he did not accept the Jewish faith but was a fire-worshipper. Thereupon the Patriarch '*The Friend of God*'—instantly turned the stranger out of doors into cold and gloom. But the story goes on that God appeared that night to Abraham in a dream and said in heavenly accents, "Abraham! Abraham! I have tolerated this man for ninety years. Couldst thou not tolerate him for a single night?" Toleration is therefore a duty, a divine duty—the duty to see brother-man from the view-point of eternity, to appraise a co-child of God as his Author and Saviour would appraise him.

Hence the religion of the Upanishads is not of an aggressive and proselyting kind. The Rishis declare that religion has not been the discovery of man but the self-disclosure of God who has assumed the responsibility for fostering the religious spirit in the bosom of each one of His creatures. Therefore, notwithstanding all differences of time and tradi-

tion, geographical conditions and social environments, this Divine urge in human nature must have essential features of likeness, wherever received in the right spirit. He who believes truly and sincerely that God has been personally and directly interested in the spiritual growth of His children, cannot have such irreconcilable differences with the adherents and exponents of any dispensation as to say "You and I cannot have a common interest." The Rishis further proclaim that every impulse of longing for the Infinite anywhere, in any age, is a response to the impact of His Spirit upon ours, that He has not left Himself without a witness at all times, in all climes, among all nations, that to Him as the In-dwelling Spirit in every heart, all are equally dear, that the hunger and thirst for God, the passion for goodness and the instinct for rightness are universal though expressed in varying forms. Names, modes, rites may vary; but the inner desire will be the same. 'The sense of a beyond' is something of a divine right of all. This is the core of and the fundamental unity underlying all religions. It is as true and as capable of proof as any proposition of Euclid. On this common ground, men have raised many different buildings.

In His own marvellous manner, God leads us from one prophet to another prophet, from one sage to another sage, from one Rishi to another Rishi. The gospel delivered from the lips of an Yajnavalkya or a Buddha or a Zarathushtra or a Christ or a Mahammad is still being delivered through ever so many messengers and harbingers, giving rise to different creeds and denominations owing to the inevitable human imitations and imperfections. But the several creeds have all the same essence. They are all part and parcel of one Eternal Religion. The difference lies in the forms and the details. Let us hold to our own creed, but let us not despise our fellowmen of other creeds, for, we are all branches from the common root of faith. As different rivers taking their start from different mountains, running

crooked or straight, all come and mingle their waters in the ocean, so the different religions, with their different points of view, at last, all converge towards and terminate in the Supreme Being. Besides, wherever we see extraordinary holiness and extraordinary power raising and purifying humanity, we should know that the Supreme Being is there irrespective of the name with which that faith is labelled. The function of every religion, therefore, is to assimilate the good in the others into its own fabric and to preserve its own individuality and develop according to its own law of growth. All sects may retain their distinctive peculiarities and yet be united in fraternal alliance and for one harmonious unity, even as in a musical choir there are many voices and many instruments, each with its own individuality, its own specific character, its own peculiar tone, yet out of their union comes forth sweet and delicious music.

Thus finally, all religions become one, unified in God, as Raja Ram Mohan Roy declared. The story goes that as Wesley was taken to the gate of Heaven, he made the enquiry "Any Wesleyans here?" "None" was the answer. "Any Protestants?" "No, none." "Then, any Christians at all?" "None." "Then, who dwell here?" "All believers only." Unto Raja Ram Mohan Roy belongs the glory of the archetype of modern universalists who hold that the citizenship of Heaven is chartered to not sectaries but only to 'Believers,' and that *God's Religion* is lofty as is His love and ample as the wants of man. As rivers spring out of the same mountain-caves but are impelled in various directions that all the adjoining country might be watered and enriched, each flowing in its ordained course but all combining to make the atmosphere cool and the soil fertile and all marching ahead to the same main, even so all religions are ordained by the same God, come out of the lofty height of Divine inspiration, flow in diverse directions to benefit diverse people and become confluent in living hearts towards

the same goal of Right and Righteousness. As we thus come to feel that it is from the same source that all dispensations proceed and as their common substance spreads in import and inspiration, we shall see how, as Emerson has said, Jove nods to Jove from behind each one of us. When Jove thus beckons to Jove, we are all under the influence of the Supreme One.

In this connection, I may state what Saint Ramakrishna Paramahansa has taught his disciples, following the footsteps of the Upanishadic Rishis: Says he:

"I have practised all religions, Hinduism, Islam, Christianity and I have also followed the paths of the different Hindu sects . . . , I have found that it is the same God towards whom all are directing their steps, though along different paths. You must try all beliefs and traverse all the different ways once. Wherever I look, I see men quarrelling in the name of religion—Hindus, Mohammedans, Brahmos, Vaishnavas and the rest, but they never reflect that He, who is called Krishna, is also called Shiva, and bears the name of Primitive Energy. Jesus and Allah as well—the same Rama with a thousand names. The tank has several ghats. At one Hindus draw water in pitchers and call it *jal*; at another Mussalmans draw water in leathern bottles and call it *pani*; and at a third Christians call it *water*. Can we imagine that the water is not *jal*, but only *pani* or *water*? How ridiculous! The Substance is One under different names and everyone is seeking the same Substance; nothing but climate, temperament and name vary. Let each man follow his own path. If he sincerely and ardently wishes to know God, peace be unto him! He will surely realise Him."

The Rishis of the Upanishads envisage God's Kingdom on earth as a Kingdom of Love, a Kingdom of ineffable Peace and Joy in which His *Truth*—His heavenly Truth—finds a recognition, a reception, in every mind and in every home; in which His Justice, His flawless Justice seasoned with Mercy, hallowed with Righteousness, is supreme, invincible, triumphant and sovereign over all; in which compassion, sympathy, fellow-feeling, brotherly affection, fraternal peace, mutual whole-hearted love, are the bonds, the sole bonds,

the sacred bonds of relationship between man and man, community and community, race and race, country and country; in which one song of praise and glory to the Supreme Being goes forth from every soul, from every home, from every tribe, from every nation, from pole to pole, from east to west, out of all hearts, through all voices, in all places, at all times.

The Rishis of the Upanishads foresaw a brotherhood on earth in which all men should feel as members of one family designed to dwell together in one love; in which the strong shall help the weak, those with plenty shall share with those in want, and the joyous shall sing into the ears of the sad and the victorious shall succour the struggling in life's battles. A brotherhood in which with all barriers demolished, all fences pulled down, all dividing lines wiped out, we shall all enter into the holy presence of the Lord, into the Holy of Holies. A brotherhood in which with every prejudice dispelled, every passion subdued, every excess disciplined, respecting where we scorned, fraternising where we antagonised, loving where we hated, serving where we domineered, our creeds liberalised, our denominations harmonised, our classes fused, our nationalities leagued, our hearts replete with charity, our souls rhythmic with hosanna, we shall prostrate ourselves before the *Parabrahman* of the Universe.

In this glorious spiritual brotherhood visioned by the Rishis, the vilest and least, the noblest and most high, form one family and sit side by side, the last often becoming first, the first last in loving justice to the claims of all. Sicknes, sorrow, death, pain, poverty, more than everything else, sin, with its loathsome misery, in one member of God's household should call forth the tenderest sympathy and demand instant cure. The fallen woman, is not the plague-spot of society but the lowly creature we must stretch forth our hand to lift up. The wife is not the caterer unto carnalities, but the companion soul, the co-pilgrim, set to treat

the path of duty, to glimpse the light of truth, to swell the music of joy, to raise the voice of praise with men unto the glory of Brahman. The child is a charge unto the loving heart. The brother is a call to sympathy. The enemy is an occasion for patience and prayer. Sickness is the opportunity for struggle. Those drunk with God, though they are many, are yet one. When the love of God is reached, divergence becomes impossible ; for the soul has passed beyond the sphere of the manifold and is immersed in the one Reality ; and they learn with Zeno to count men not as Athenesians and Persians, but as joint tenants of a common field to be tilled for the advantage of all and each. Thus all feel the harmony that pervades everywhere, because God is the Father of all.

In the glorious kingdom of God on earth, the potential ideal of the Sages of the Upanishads, there shall be no creed, no dogma, no sect, no denomination. All constitute one harmonious brotherhood singing the glory of God in different voices and with different instruments. Thus shall India with the Hindus and the Mussalmans, the Parsees and the Christians, the Jains and the Buddhists, the Sikhs and all other sectaries, praise the glory of the Supreme Being with different voices and different accompaniments. But all their different voices and peculiar modes of chanting shall commingle in one sweet and swelling chorus—one Universal Anthem proclaiming in solemn and stirring notes in the world below and the heavens above, the holy affinity of heart to heart, the God-inspired love of soul to soul, the Heaven-woven tie of kindred faith and aspiration; in one word, the Fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man and the kinship of creation.

No wonder, therefore, the Upanishads constitute India's accumulated wealth, her richest acquisition, her highest achievement. They are the most precious spiritual heritage not only of India but of the whole of humanity. In loftiness of conception, display of primeval wisdom, depth of insight,

serenity of contemplation, fervour of devotion, ecstasy of enthusiasm, austerity of discipline, beauty of expression, the Upanishads are a remarkable accomplishment of what is divine and æsthetic in man, the most astounding product of the human mind in any age and in any country.

In range of vision, in reach of sympathy, in versatility of powers, the Rishis are unique figures in the history of the world. They are people of a higher order to whom the soul is the inner gem and the body a mere covering; the inner soul is the piercing light which cannot be clouded.

As all buildings from the cottage to the palace or the enduring pyramid are constructed with a few materials, wood, stone, metals, etc., or as the letters of the alphabet, though few, yet by their combination form all we can express in record and oratory, in poetry and science; or as from time to time, we find how few are the elements that in their different states and combinations, produce all the phenomena of this material world; so are a few, simple, unsophisticated ideas of the ancient Rishis who were constantly enriched and mellowed by study and thought, meditation and communion, the source, the essence, the elements and the power, of not the exterior, frothy, material dross, but the interior, substantial, spiritual cream of the Hindu religion.

The Rishis' enthusiasm and earnestness in delineating the matchless power, the perpetual creativeness, the impenetrable wisdom, the unerring order, the unfailing beneficence, the august righteousness, the celestial symphony of love, the inexhaustible wealth of self-giving goodness and grace of God who is beyond word and thought, are superb, unbounded and incomparably glorious. As the Rishis' hearts received the glowing light of His Truth, the nectarine sweetness of His Love, the captivating charm of His Beauty and the heavenly aura of His Holiness, their souls mirrored forth Him, the True God—*Ekameva adviteeyam*.

Schopenhauer, the German sage, who stemmed the tide of materialism and revolutionised the spiritual thought of Europe in the first half of the nineteenth century, acclaimed the Upanishads, with the lynx-like perspicacity of an intrepid philosopher, as "**products of the highest wisdom.**" Besides, he has had the courage to proclaim to an incredulous age the vast treasures of thought which were lying buried in these relics of ancient Indian lore, how from every sentence, deep, original and sublime conceptions arise and how the whole is pervaded by a high, holy and earnest spirit. Above all, he candidly admits that his own philosophy was powerfully impregnated by the fundamental doctrines of the Upanishads. Says he: "**In the whole world, there is no study so beneficial and so elevating as that of the Upanishads. It has been the solace of my life; it will be the solace of my death.**" This is no exaggerated exuberance of a momentary impulse, for, in the estimation of Max-Muller, Schopenhauer was "a thoroughly honest thinker and honest speaker, and no one would suspect him of any predilection for what has been so readily called Indian mysticism." This is not all. Schopenhauer has also made the following marvellous prophecy:

"In India, our religion" referring to Christianity "will now and never strike root: the primitive wisdom of the human race will never be pushed aside there by the events of Galilee. On the contrary, Indian wisdom will flow back upon Europe and produce a thorough change in our knowing and thinking."

Needless for me to quote the testimony of Max-Muller himself to the greatness of the Upanishads. Says he: "The Upanishads are the sources of the Vedanta philosophy, a system in which human speculation, seems to have reached its very acme. I spend my happiest hours in reading Vedantic books. They are to me like the light of the morning, like the pure air of the mountains—so simple, so true, if once understood."

Dr. Deussen, the German Vedantist, to whom the East and the West are complementary as the Intelligence and the Will, referring to Upanishads, declares: "The world-wide historical significance of these documents cannot, in our judgment, be more clearly indicated than by showing how the deep fundamental conception of Plato and Kant was precisely that which *already* formed the basis of Upanishadic teaching."

This is what G. W. Russel, a celebrated Irish poet, says of the *Upanishads* and the *Bhagavadgita*: "Goethe, Wordsworth, Emerson and Thoreau among moderns have something of this vitality and wisdom, but we can find all they have said and much more in the grand sacred books of the East. The *Bhagavadgita* and the *Upanishads* contain such god-like fulness of wisdom on all things that I feel the authors must have looked with calm remembrance back through a thousand passionate lives, full of feverish strife for and with shadows, ere they could have written with such certainty of things which the soul feels to be sure."

Needless to state that almost all the saints and sages who appeared in India in recent times have been, as it were, a living commentary on the texts of the *Upanishads* and the *Bhagavadgita* and Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa shone as unquestionably the brightest star in the spiritual horizon in the second half of the nineteenth century whose profound love of man and appreciation of truth were not bound by any creed or denomination, sect or nationality, "*whose life*," in the words of Swami Vivekananda, "*a thousand-fold more than whose teaching, was a living commentary on the texts of the Upanishads, was in fact the spirit of the Upanishads living in human form . . . the harmony of all the diverse thoughts of India.*"

I may conclude by adding that the last to take up the cause of Upanishadic revival in recent times was Swami Vivekananda himself helped by a noble band of self-sacri-

ficing and indefatigable co-adjutors. The enthusiasm of the Swami and his associates in disseminating the religion of a free unsectarian Vedantism and the philanthropic work of the truest and most unsectarian type, is boundless and deserves the highest praise and the heartiest sympathy and co-operation of all true lovers and well-wishers of the country.

Such then is the mighty influence which our *Upanishads* have exercised on the philosophical thought not only of Asia but of modern Europe. It, therefore, behoves everyone of us, all the more, to earnestly take to their study. Let us seek to be vivified by the spirit of the Upanishadic Rishis, to imbibe their principles, to realise their hopes, to glow with their aspirations, to further their aims, to sustain their work, in a way to cherish their memory by re-producing and re-incarnating them, no doubt with inevitable modifications, in the heart and the life of every one of us. And in the Para-Brahman of the Rishis, we will find a Preacher, Teacher, and Leader, who, as a Pillar of Heavenly Fire and a Pillar of Cooling Cloud, will lead us all from the Egypt of superstition and ignorance, prejudice and intolerance to the Palestine of reason and knowledge, peace and piety, where everything will be found overflowing with the milk and honey of love and liberty.

May we realise further that the Buddha of the Buddhists, the Allah of the Moslems, the Jehovah of the Jews, the Father in Heaven of the Christians, the Ahura Mazda of the Zoroastrians, the Tao of the Chinese, is no other than the Para-Brahman of the Rishis, revealing Himself to us under different names, at different times and in different climes and that we are all designed and destined to be drawn under the same vinculum of Deity and to live and rejoice as members of one common world fraternity! No stranger as against a favourite, no outsider as against an inmate, no fallen man as against a saved adorer; all, all are in the home of God, because God is everywhere. Let us recognise in this new pilgrimage

the Fatherhood of God, not in the accidental, but in the vital sense.

May He be our load-star, our captain, our pilot, our steersman to take us along the pathless ocean of life according to His pre-ordained purposes! May the joy, sanctity, blessedness and ecstasy of the worship of the Para Brahman burst upon us all here and hereafter like a flood of life and light, love and consolation!

The God of all Truth lead us! The God of all Wisdom illumine us! The God of all Love cherish us! The God of all Righteousness sanctify us! May the Para Brahman of all Grace dwell in us and reign over us and He be praised, glorified and adored for ever and ever by the whole of humanity!

THE HINDUISM OF THE UPANISHADS.

PART II—Material Texts of the Twelve Classical Upanishads.

CHAPTER I. THE CHANDOGYA UPANISHAD.

The *Chandogya* Upanishad is one of the two largest Upanishads, the other being *Brihadaranyaka*. These two are generally acclaimed as having contributed to the Vedanta the most important materials containing the richest lore in the whole of the Upanishadic literature. The *Chandogya* is considered by far the most ancient of the Upanishads. The *Brihadaranyaka*, though no doubt its contemporary, is somewhat later. Some facts, stories and parables are common to both and the expressions in which they are clothed are identically the same. The Rishi Uddalaka Aruni and his son, Svetaketu, the Kshatriya king Pravahana Jaivali of Panchala, are mentioned in both the Upanishads. The story of the conflict between *devas* and *asuras*, the parable of the senses and life contending for supremacy, the episode of Svetaketu repairing to the court of the Panchala king for instruction, are also found in both the Upanishads. Rishi Yajnavalkya, whose teaching fills a greater part of the *Brihadaranyaka* Upanishad, however, finds no mention in *Chandogya* and this may perhaps be due to his reputation as the greatest of the Upanishadic seers not having been established when the *Chandogya* was composed. In the *Chandogya* which consists of eight chapters the conception of One Supreme Being pervading and overruling the whole Universe has been fully realised.

The First Chapter deals with meditation on *Udgitha* who is spoken of as the highest God equivalent to the Brahman of later times. The Vedic mystic syllable '*Om*' that had to be pronounced at the beginning of each *Veda* and of every recitation of Vedic hymns is identified with *Udgitha*.

The object of the chapter is to explain the various meanings which the syllable 'Om' may assume in the mind of a devotee, some of them being extremely artificial and unmeaning till at last the highest meaning of 'Om' is reached, viz., Brahman, the intelligent cause of the universe. This chapter contains thirteen sections which are full of allusions to sacrificial technicalities, all intended to show the importance of the syllable 'Om', partly as a mere word used at the sacrifices, partly as the mysterious name of the Highest Self. As every priest at the Soma sacrifices in which three classes of priests are always engaged, has to begin his part of the ceremony with 'Om', the whole sacrifice is said to be dependent on the syllable *Om*, and to be for the glory of that syllable, as an emblem of the Highest Self, a knowledge of whom is the indirect result of all sacrifices. The greatness of the syllable *Om* is explained by the vital breaths of the priest, the sacrificer, and his wife; its essence by rice, corn, etc., which constitute the oblations. Why breath and food are due to the syllable *Om*, is explained by the sacrifice, which is dependent on that syllable, ascending to the sun, the sun sending rain, rain producing food, and food producing breath and life.

In his 'Abridgement of the Vedanta,' Raja Ram Mohan Roy explains the significance of the syllable 'Om' thus:—

"The Veda (the Upanishad) begins and concludes with the three peculiar and mysterious epithets of God, viz., first OM, second TAT, third SAT. The first of these signifies, "That Being which preserves, destroys and creates". The second implies, "That only Being which is neither male nor female". The third announces, "The True Being". These collective terms simply affirm that One Unknown, True Being is the Creator, Preserver and Destroyer of the Universe."

Section II gives the story of the devas and asuras contending for supremacy. They stand for the good and evil inclinations of man. The moral of the story is that the evil which men design to do to others will ultimately recoil on themselves.



“Verse (1) When the devas and asuras struggled together, both of the race of Prajapati, the devas took the *Udgitha (Om)*, thinking they would vanquish the asuras with it.

“ (2) They meditated on the *Udgitha (Om)* as the breath (scent) in the nose, but the asuras pierced it (the breath) with evil. Therefore, we smell by the breath in the nose both what is good-smelling and what is bad-smelling. For the breath was pierced by evil.

“ (3) Then they meditated on the *Udgitha (Om)* as speech, but the asuras pierced it with evil. Therefore, we speak both truth and falsehood. For speech is pierced by evil.

“ (4) Then they meditated on the *Udgitha (Om)* as the eye, but the asuras pierced it with evil. Therefore we see both what is sightly and unsightly. For the eye is pierced by evil.

“ (5) Then they meditated on the *Udgitha (Om)* as the ear, but the asuras pierced it with evil. Therefore we hear both what should be heard and what should not be heard. For the ear is pierced by evil.

“ (6) They then meditated on the *Udgitha (Om)* as the mind but the asuras pierced it with evil. Therefore we conceive both what should be conceived and what should not be conceived. For the mind is pierced by evil.

“ (7) Then comes this breath (of life) in the mouth. They meditated on the *Udgitha (Om)* as that breath. When the asuras came to it, they were scattered as (a ball of earth would be scattered when hitting a solid stone).

“ (8) Thus, as a ball of earth is scattered when hitting on a solid stone, will he be scattered who wishes evil to one who knows this, or who persecutes him ; for he is a solid stone.”

Section VIII and the first two verses of **Section IX** are an interesting dialogue on the *First Cause* between two Brahmanas named Silaka Salavatya and Kaikitayana Dalbhya

on the one hand and a royal sage, Pravahana Jaivali, named above, on the other. Dissatisfied with the conclusions arrived at by the Brahmanas, Pravahana expounds his own views on the Infinite,—*Akashatma* (of the nature of space). The discussion shows that during the Chandogya period, the position of the Supreme God was, as already stated in Chapter I of Part I, *supra*, claimed on behalf of different gods by different sages and that generally one of the Vedic deities was declared to be the Supreme Being. The three above-named scholars who were versed in Vedic knowledge once met and said to each other, "We are versed in the *Udgitha*; let us have a discussion on the subject." When all agreed, Pravahana Jaivali said: "You two speak first, for I wish to hear what you Brahmanas have to say." Then Silaka Salavatya said to Kaikitayana Dalbhya "with your permission, I will ask you." "Ask" said Dalbhya, "In what does *Agni* merge in *Moksha*?" "In *Varuna*," he answered. "In what does *Varuna* merge?" "In *Surya*." "In what does *Surya* merge?" "In *Daksha*," he replied. "In what does *Daksha* merge in *Moksha*?" He replied, "*Rudra*." "In what does *Rudra* merge?" He replied, "Let no man think that there is anything higher than *Rudra*, for we recognise that the Sama Veda expounds *Rudra* alone, because its hymns are songs in praise of *Rudra* alone." Then Salavatya said to Dalbhya, "O Dalbhya, thy idea of the highest taught in Sama is imperfect and incomplete. But if any one were to say, may your head fall, surely your head will fall off." Then Dalbhya said, "Well then, let me learn this from your venerable self." "Learn it" said Salavatya. "What is the goal of *Rudra*?" "*Brahma*," he replied. "What is the goal of *Brahma*?" asked Dalbhya. He replied, "Let no man think that there is anything higher than *Brahma*, for we recognise that the Sama Veda expounds *Brahma* alone because its hymns are sama in praise of *Brahma* alone." Then said Pravahana Jaivali to Salavatya "O Silaka Sala-

vatya, your idea of the highest taught in the Sama is finite and if any one were to say 'May your head fall off,' surely your head will fall off." Then Salavatya said, "Well then, let me know this from you." "Sir, know it," replied Jaivali. Then Salavatya asked "What is the goal of Brahma?" "The all-luminous *Akasha*, sky", replied Pravahana, "for, all the mighty beings take their rise from the *Akasha* and have their setting in the *Akasha*, the *Akasha* is greater than these, that is their refuge. He indeed is higher than the high. He is the *Udgitha*, is the Infinite."

Sections 10 and 11 give the interesting story of Ushasti Chakrayana, a learned Brahmana priest. In reply to the question of the singer of a particular hymn as to who the deity of that hymn was, Ushasti said, "Prana" and added "All these features merge into Prana (Breath) alone and from Prana alone do they rise. And this Prana is nothing but Brahman."

The story is also interesting from a social aspect as it shows that people of the highest castes have had no objection to accepting food from those of the lowest. Ushasti Chakrayana gladly accepts a part of the meat which he sees an elephant driver eating when the former is on his way to a king's palace in search of priestly offices, and if he rejects his host's offer of water, it was not because it was contaminated by the latter's touch, but because apparently, he did not like to drink water from a pot which had already touched the lips of another man. An extract from Raja Ram Mohan Roy's "*Abridgment of the Vedanta*" bearing on this matter is reproduced below:—

"Although the Veda (Upanishad) says, 'That he who has true faith in the Omnipresent Supreme Being may eat all that exists', i.e., is not bound to enquire what is his food, or who prepares it, nevertheless the Vedanta limits that authority thus: 'The above mentioned authority of the Veda for eating all sorts of food should only be observed at the time of distress, because it is found in the Veda, that Chakrayana (a celebrated Brahman) ate the meat cooked by the elephant keepers

during a famine''. It is concluded that he acted according to the above stated authority of the Veda, only at the time of distress''.

The Second Chapter which consists of twenty-five sections merely glorifies the Sama Veda.

The Third Chapter consists of nineteen sections and speaks of Aditya as the highest God, as the honey of the Devas.

Sections 6 to 10 are intended to show that he who knows or meditates on the sacrifices prescribed in this chapter enjoys his reward in different worlds with the Vasus, Rudras, etc. for certain periods of time, till at last he reaches the true Brahman. Of these periods, each succeeding one is supposed to be double the length of the preceding one. This is expressed by imagining a migration of the sun from east to south, west, north and zenith. Each change of the sun marks a new world, and the duration of each successive world is computed as double the duration of the preceding world. Similar ideas have been more fully developed in the Puranas.

Sections 12 and 13 describe the way of realising the presence of God and the fixing of the mind on Him with the help of some phenomenal object—subtle or gross, relating to the body. Particular spaces and objects are mentioned not as limitations of the Absolute but only as helps to His realisation.

Section XII.

“(1) The Gayatri (Verse) is everything whatsoever here exists. Gayatri indeed is speech, for speech sings forth (Gaya-ti) and protects (traya-ti) everything that here exists.

“(2) That Gayatri is also the earth, for everything that here exists rests on the earth and does not go beyond.

“(3) That earth again is the body in man, for in it the vital airs (pranas, which are everything) rest, and do not go beyond.

“(4) That body again in man is the heart within man, for in it the pranas (which are everything) rest, and do not go beyond.

“ (5) That Gayatri has four feet and is sixfold. And this is also declared by a *Rik* Verse (Rig Veda x. 90. 3).

“ (6) Such is the greatness of it (of Brahman, under the disguise of Gayatri) ; greater than it is the Person (Purusha). His feet are all things. The immortal with three feet is in heaven (i.e., in himself).

“ (7) The Brahman which has been thus described (as immortal) with three feet in heaven and as Gayatri is the same as the ether which is around us.

“ (8) And the ether which is around us, is the same as the ether which is within us. And the ether which is within us.

“ (9) That is the ether within the heart. That ether in the heart (as Brahman) is omnipresent and unchanging. He who knows this obtains omnipresent and unchangeable happiness.”

For the exposition of the Gayatri mantram, see Chapte XIV of Part I of this Manual.

Section XIII.

“ (1) For that heart there are five gates belonging to the devas (the senses). The eastern gate is the Prana, (up-breathing) that is the eye, that is Aditya, the sun. Let a man meditate on that as brightness (glory of countenance) and health. He who knows this becomes bright and healthy.

“ (2) The southern gate is the *Vyana* (back-breathing), that is the ear, that is the moon. Let a man meditate on that as happiness and fame. He who knows this becomes happy and famous.

“ (3) The western gate is the *Apana* (down-breathing), that is speech, that is Agni (fire). Let a man meditate on that as glory of countenance and health. He who knows this becomes glorious and healthy.

“ (4) The northern gate is the *Samana* (on-breathing), that is mind, that is Parjanya (rain). . Let a man meditate on that as celebrity and beauty. He who knows this becomes celebrated and beautiful.

“(5) The upper gate is the *Udana* (out-breathing), that is air, that is ether. Let a man meditate on that as strength and greatness. He who knows this becomes strong and great.

“(6) These are the five men of Brahman, the door-keepers of the Svarga (heaven) world. He who knows these five men of Brahman, the door-keepers of the Svarga-world, in his family, a strong son is born. He who thus knows these five men of Brahman, as the door-keepers of the Svarga world, enters himself the Svarga world.

“(7) Now that light which shines above this heaven, higher than all, higher than everything, in the highest world beyond which there are no other worlds, that is the same light which is within man. And of this we have this visible proof.

“(8) Namely, when we thus perceive by touch the warmth here in the body. And of it we have this audible proof; namely, when we thus, after stopping our ears, listen to what is like the rolling of a carriage, or the bellowing of an ox, or the sound of a burning fire (within the ears). Let a man meditate on this as the Brahman which is seen and heard. He who knows this, becomes conspicuous and celebrated, yea, he becomes celebrated.”

Section XIV.

This gives what is known as *Sandilyavidya* or *Upasana* (devout meditation) of Sandilya Rishi setting forth the gist of the Upanishadic teaching,—the immanent and transcendent nature of the Supreme Being and the goal and destiny of man which is union with Him. This may be called the very central teaching of this Upanishad which the later Upanishads have re-echoed.

“(1) All this is Brahman. Let a man meditate on that (visible world) as beginning, ending and breathing in it (the Brahman). Now man is a creature of will. According to what his will is in this world, so will he be when he has

departed this life. Let him, therefore, have this will and belief.

“(2) The intelligent, whose body is spirit, whose form is light, whose thoughts are true, whose nature is like ether (omnipresent and invisible), from whom all works, all desires, all sweet odours and tastes proceed; He who embraces all this, who never speaks, and is never surprised;

“(3) He is myself within the heart, smaller than a corn of rice, smaller than a corn of barley, smaller than a mustard seed, smaller than a canary seed or the kernel of a canary seed. He is also myself within the heart, greater than the earth, greater than the sky, greater than heaven, greater than all these worlds.

“(4) He from whom all works, all desires, all sweet odours and tastes proceed, who embraces all this, who never speaks and who is never surprised, He myself within the heart is that Brahman. When I shall have departed from hence, I shall obtain Him (that Self). He who has this faith has no doubt; thus said Sandilya; yea, thus he said”.

Here the author of Chandogya has soared into the highest regions of philosophical speculation possible for a heaven-illumined soul.

Chapter IV contains seventeen sections of which ii, iv, v and xv alone seem to be of some importance.

Section ii gives the story of Janasruti Pantrayana, perhaps a Sudra king, offering his daughter in marriage to Raikva, a Brahmin teacher, and in return receiving spiritual instruction. When the king first approached the teacher with material presents such as cows, a necklace and a carriage and begged for being taught about the Deity whom Raikva worshipped, the latter contemptuously turned down his request saying, “Fie, necklace and carriage be thine, O Sudra, together with the cows” Thereupon Pantrayana took again his own daughter with material offerings. Raikva then came down from his pedestal, gladly accepted her as wife and

imparted religious knowledge to her father. This story shows that though the position of sudras during the Upanishadic age was well-nigh intolerable, the caste system was not so rigid as now.

Section iv gives the story of Satyakama Jabala so well-known for its bold disregard of the tradition of caste prejudices. Satyakama Jabala was the illegitimate son of Jabala, a maid servant. He seeks discipleship under Hari-drumata. The latter asks him—

“Verse (4). Of what family are you, my friend? He replied: “I do not know, sir, of what family I am. I asked my mother, and she answered: “In my youth when I had to move about much as a servant, I conceived thee. I do not know of what family thou art. I am Jabala by name. Thou art Satyakama”; I am, therefore, Satyakama Jabala, sir.

“5. He said to him: “No one but a true Brahmana would thus speak out. Go and fetch fuel, friend, I shall initiate you. You have not swerved from the truth.”

Having initiated him, he chose four hundred lean and weak cows and said: “Tend these, friend”. He drove them out and said to himself, “I shall not return unless I bring back a thousand.”

Fifth Section.

“1. ‘The bull of the herd (meant for Vayu) said to him: ‘Satyakama’. He replied: ‘Sir.’ The bull said: ‘we have become a thousand, lead us to the house of the teacher.’

“2. ‘And I will declare to you one foot of Brahman.’ Declare it, Sir, he replied. He said to him: ‘The eastern region is one quarter, the western region is one quarter, the southern region is one quarter, the northern region is one quarter. This is a foot of Brahman, consisting of the four quarters, and called Prakasavat (endowed with splendour).

“3. He who knows this and meditates on the foot of Brahman, consisting of four quarters by the name of Prakasavat, becomes endowed with splendour in this world. He

conquers the resplendent worlds, whoever knows this and meditates on the foot of Brahman, consisting of the four quarters, by the name of Prakasavat."

This interesting story shows that though the caste system had already been established, discerning teachers did not refuse to accept pupils of inferior birth. It shows also to what stern discipline involving physical hardships continuously for years, the pupils are put to before spiritual instruction is imparted to them.

Section xv shows that the only way for man's escape from the vicious circle of transmigration is the path of knowledge.

"Verse (1). He (Sage Upakosala) said: "The person that is seen in the eye, that is the Self. This is the immortal, the fearless, this is Brahman. Even though they drop melted butter or water on him, it runs away on both sides.

"(2) They call him Samyadvama, for all blessings (Vama) go towards him (samyanti). All blessings go towards him who knows this.

"(3) He is also Vamani, for he leads (nayati) all blessings (Vama). He leads all blessings who knows this.

"(4) He is also Brahmani, for he shines (bhati) in all worlds. He who knows this shines in all worlds.

"(5) Now (if one who knows this dies), whether people perform obsequies for him or no, he goes to light (arcis) from light to day, from day to the light half of the moon, from the light half of the moon to the six months during which the sun goes to the north, from the months to the year, from the year to the sun, from the sun to the moon, from the moon to the lightning. There is a person not human.

"(6) He leads them to Brahman. This is the path of the devas, the path that leads to Brahman; those who proceed on that path do not return to the life of man, yea, they do not return."

Chapter V contains twenty-four sections.

Section i gives the interesting and beautiful parable of the quarrel between the senses on the one side and life on the other side as to which of them was superior and establishes the supremacy of life.

"Verse (6). The five senses quarrelled together, who was the best saying, I am better, I am better.

"(7) They went to their father Prajapati and said : "Sir, who is the best of us ? " He replied : " He by whose departure the body seems worse than worst, he is the best of you."

"(8) The tongue (speech) departed and having been absent for a year, it came round and said : " How have you been able to live without me ? " They replied : " Like mute people not speaking, but breathing with the breath, seeing with the eye, hearing with the ear, thinking with the mind. Thus we lived". Then speech went back.

"(9) The eye (sight) departed, and having been absent for a year, it came round and said : " How have you been able to live without me." They replied : " Like blind people, not seeing, but breathing with the breath, speaking with the tongue, hearing with the ear, thinking with the mind. Thus we lived." Then the eye went back.

"(10) The ear (hearing) departed and having been absent for a year, it came round and said : " How have you been able to live without me ? " They replied : " Like deaf people, not hearing, but breathing with the breath, speaking with the tongue, thinking with the mind. Thus we lived." Then the ear went back.

"(11) The mind departed, and having been absent for a year, it came round and said : " How have you been able to live without me ? " They replied : " Like children whose mind is not yet formed, but breathing with the breath, speaking with the tongue, seeing with the eye, hearing with the ear. Thus we lived". Then the mind went back.

"(12) The breath when on the point of departing, tore

up the other senses, as a horse, going to start, might tear up the pegs to which he is tethered. They came to him and said : “ Sir, be thou (our lord) : Thou art the best among us. Do not depart from us.”

“ (13) Then the tongue said to him : “ If I am the richest, thou art the richest.” The eye said to him : “ If I am the firm rest, thou art the firm rest.”

“ (14) The ear said to him : “ If I am success, thou art success”. The mind said to him : “ If I am the home, thou art the home.”

“ (15) And people do not call them the tongue, the eyes, the ears, the minds, but the breaths (prana, the senses). For breath are all these.”

Sections iii to x give a colloquy between the royal sage Pravahana Jaivali and two Brahmanās, Aruni and his son Svetaketu who both so largely figure in this Upanishad. In the course of this conversation, Pravahana expounds his doctrine of ‘ the five fires ’ and that of the two paths,—the *Devayana* and the *Pitriyana*.

Third Section “ (1) Svetaketu Aruneya went to the assembly of the Panchalas. Pravahana Jaivali said to him : “ Boy, has your father instructed you?” “ Yes, Sir,” he replied.

“ (2) “ Do you know to what place men go from here?” “ No, Sir,” he replied. “ Do you know how they return again?” “ No, Sir,” he replied. “ Do you know where the path of Devas and the path of the fathers diverge?” “ No, Sir,” he replied.

“ (3) “ Do you know why that world never becomes full?” “ No, Sir,” he replied. “ Do you know why in the fifth libation, water is called man?” “ No, Sir,” he replied.

“ (4) Then why did you say (you had been) instructed? How could anybody who did not know these things say that he had been instructed?” Then the boy went back sorrowful to the place of his father and said : “ Though you had not instructed me, Sir, you said you had instructed me.”

“ (5) That fellow of a Rajanya asked me five ques-

tions, and I could not answer one of them." The father said: "As you have told me these questions of his, I do not know any one of them. If I knew these questions, why should I not have told you?"

"(6) Then Gautama went to the king's palace, and when he had come to him, the king offered him proper respect. In the morning, the king went out on his way to the assembly. The king said to him: "Sir, Gautama, ask a boon, of such things as men possess." He replied: "Such things as men possess may remain with you. Tell me the speech which you addressed to the boy."

"(7) The king was perplexed and commanded him, saying: "Stay with me some time." Then he said: "As (to what) you have said to me, Gautama, this knowledge did not go to any Brahmana before you, and therefore this teaching belonged in all the worlds to the Kshatria class alone". Then he began."

Fourth Section.

"(1) The altar (on which the sacrifice is supposed to be offered) is that world (heaven), O Gautama, its fuel is the sun itself, the smoke his rays, the light the day, the coals the moon, the sparks the stars.

"(2) On that altar the devas (or. pranas, represented by Agni, etc.) offer the sraddha libation (consisting of water). From that oblation rises Soma, the King (the moon)."

Fifth Section.

"(1) The altar is Parjanya (thegod of rain), O Gautama, its fuel is the air itself, the smoke the cloud, the light the lightning, the coals the thunderbolt, the sparks the thunderings.

"(2) On that altar the devas offer Soma, the King (the moon). From that oblation rises rain."

Sixth Section.

"The altar is the earth, O Gautama; its fuel is the year itself, the smoke the ether, the light the night, the coals the quarters, the sparks the intermediate quarters.

“(2) On that altar the Devas (Pranas) offer rain.
From that oblation rises food (corn etc).”

Seventh Section.

“(1) The altar is man, O Gautama ; its fuel speech itself, the smoke the breath, the light the tongue, the coals the eye, the sparks the ear.

“(2) On that altar the Devas (Pranas) offer food.
From that oblation rises seed.”

Eighth Section.

“(1) The altar is woman, O Gautama.

“(2) On that altar the Devas (Aranas) offer seed.
From that oblation rises the germ.”

Ninth Section.

“(1) For this reason is water in the fifth libation called Man. This germ, covered in the womb having dwelt there ten months, or more or less is born.

“(2) When born, he lives whatever the length of his life may be. When he has departed, his friends carry him, as appointed, to the fire (of the funeral pile) from whence he came, from whence he sprang.”

Tenth Section.

“(1) Those who know this (even though they still be grihasthas, householders) and those who in the forest follow faith and austerities (the Vanaprasthas, and of the parivrajakas), those who not yet know the Highest (Brahman) go to light (arkis), from light to day, from day to the light half of the moon, from the light half of the moon to the six months when the sun goes to the north, from the six months when the sun goes to the north to the year, from the year to the sun, from the sun to the moon, from the moon to the lightning. There is a person not human.

“(2) He leads them to Brahman (the conditioned Brahman). This is the path of the Devas.

“(3) But they who living in a village practise (a life of) sacrifices, works of public utility, and alms, they go to the smoke, from smoke to night, from night to the dark half of the moon, from the dark half of the moon to the six months when the sun goes to the south. But they do not reach the year.

“(4) From the months they go to the world of the fathers, from the world of the fathers to the ether, from the ether to the moon. That is Soma, the king. Here they are loved (eaten) by the Devas, yes the Devas love (eat) them.

“(5) Having dwelt there, till their (good) works are consumed, they return again that way as they came, to the ether, from the ether to the air. Then the sacrificer having become air, becomes smoke, having become smoke, he becomes mist ;

“(6) Having become mist, he becomes a cloud having become a cloud, he rains down. Then he is born as rice and corn, herbs and trees, sesamum and beans. From thence the escape is beset with most difficulties. For whoever the persons may be that eat the food, and beget offspring he henceforth becomes like unto them.

“(7) Those whose conduct has been good, will quickly attain some good birth, the birth of a Brahmana or a Kshatriya or a Vaisya. But those whose conduct has been evil, will quickly attain an evil birth, the birth of a dog, or a hog, or a Chandala.

“(8) On neither of these two ways those small creatures (flies, worms, etc.) are continually returning of whom it may be said ; Live and die. Theirs is a third place. Therefore that world never becomes full. Hence let a man take care to himself. And thus it is said in the following sloka :—

“(9) A man who steals gold, who drinks spirits, who dishonours his Guru's bed, who kills a Brahman, these four fall, and as a fifth he who associates with them.

“(10) But he who thus knows the five fires is not defiled

by sin, even though he associates with them. He who knows this, is pure, clean and obtains the world of the blessed, yea, he obtains the world of the blessed."

Max-Muller has an interesting and thought provoking note on the five questions raised and the two paths described in the foregoing sections which I reproduce below :—

"First, why in the fifth oblation water is called man : secondly, to what place men go after death, some by the path of the Devas, others by the path of the fathers, others again by neither of these paths; thirdly, how they return; some returning to Brahman, others returning to the earth; fourthly, where the paths of the Devas and the fathers diverge, viz., when from the half-year the path of the Devas goes on to the year while that of the fathers branches on to the world of the fathers; fifthly, why that world, the other world, does never become full, viz., because men either go on to Brahman or return again to the world.

Many questions are raised among Indian philosophers on the exact meaning of certain passages occurring in the preceding paragraphs. First as to who is admitted to the path of the Devas? Household-ers, who know the secret doctrine of the five fires or the five oblations of the Agnihotra, as described above, while other household-ers, who only perform the ordinary sacrifices, without a knowledge of their secret meaning go by the path of the fathers. Secondly those who have retired to the forest and whose worship there consists in faith and austerities, i.e., Vanaprasthas and Parivarajakas, before they arrive at a knowledge of the true Brahman. The question then arises, whether religious students also enter the path of the Devas? This is affirmed, because Puranas and Smritis assert it, or because of text, if properly understood, does not exclude it. Those, on the contrary, who know, not only a conditioned, but the highest unconditioned Brahman, do not proceed on the path of the Devas but obtain Brahman immediately.

Again, there is much difference of opinion whether, after a man has been in the moon, consuming his works, he can be born again. Birth is the result of former works, and if former works are altogether consumed, there can be no new birth. This, however, is shown to be an erroneous view, because, besides the good sacrificial works, the fruits of which are consumed in the moon, there are other works which have to be enjoyed or expiated, as the case may be, in a new existence.

The great difficulty or danger in the round of transmigration arises when the rain has fructified the earth, and passes into herbs and trees, rice, corn and beans. For, first of all, some of the rain does

not fructify at once, but falls into rivers and into the sea, to be swallowed up by fishes and sea-monsters. Then, only after these have been dissolved in the sea, and after the sea water has been attracted by clouds, the rain falls down again, it may be on desert or stony land. Here it may be swallowed by snakes or deer and these may be swallowed up by other animals, so that the round of existence seems endless. Nor is this all. Some rain may dry up or be absorbed by bodies that cannot be eaten. Then if the rain is absorbed by rice, corn, etc., and this be eaten, it may be eaten by children or by men who have renounced marriage and thus again lose the chance of a new birth. Lastly, there is the danger arising from the nature of the being in whom the food, such as rice and corn, becomes a new seed, and likewise from the nature of the mother. All these chances have to be met before a new birth as a Brahmana, Kshatriya, or Vaisya can be secured.

Another curious distinction is here made by Sankara in his commentary. There are some, he says, who assume the form of rice, corn, etc., not in their descent from a higher world as described in the Upanishad, but as a definite punishment for certain evil deeds they have committed. These remain in that state till the results of their evil deeds are over and assume then a new body, according to their work, like caterpillars. With them there is also a consciousness of these states and the acts which caused them to assume this or that body, leave impressions behind, like dreams. This is not the case with those who in their descent from the moon, pass, as we saw, through an existence as rice, corn, etc. They have no consciousness of such existence, at least not in their descent. In their ascent to the moon, they have consciousness, as a man who climbs up a tree knows what he is about. But in their descent, that consciousness is gone, as it is when a man falls down from a tree. Otherwise, a man, who by his good works had deserved rewards in the moon, would, while corn is being ground, suffers tortures, as if he were in hell, and the very object of good works as taught by the Veda, would be defeated. As we see that a man struck by a hammer can be carried away unconscious, so it is in the descent of souls, till they are born again as men and gain a new start for the attainment of the Highest Brahman.

Sections xi to xviii give a conversation between Asva-pati, a royal sage, and Uddalaka Aruni and five other Brahmanas. He expounds to them the doctrine of *Vaisvanara*, the world as a Person. Each of these six scholars had his own conception of the Highest. The first on being asked whom he considered said it was *Diram* the Self; the second

said it was *Aditya*, the third *Vayu*; the fourth *Akasa*, the fifth *Apam* (water). Aruni said the highest he meditated upon was *Prithivi*, the earth. But the king was not satisfied with any of these answers, because all made the mistake of identifying a particular deity, one conceived as presiding over a limited part of the world, with *Vaisvanara*, the Universal Self; whereas the truth is that He is the whole, the all-comprehending Infinite, of whom natural objects and individual selves are parts. The whole is indeed in every part, but an exclusive emphasis on a part or parts is liable to obstruct the vision of the whole. This is the mistake of deva-worshippers everywhere and in every period of human history. The priestly class, absorbed in ceremonial religion is specially liable to the mistake, while those untrammelled by convention and tradition like the ancient *rajarishis*, royal sages, discover the error more easily than others. Accordingly king Asvapati instructs the Brahmanas as follows:

Section xviii.

“(1) Then he said to them all: “You eat your food, knowing that *Vaisvanara Self* as if it were many. But he who worships the *Vaisvanara Self* as a span long, and as identical with himself, he eats food in all worlds, in all beings, in all Selves.

“(2) Of that *Vaisvanara Self*, the head is Sutejas (having good light), the eye *Visvarupa* (multiform), the breath *Prithagvartman* (having various courses), the trunk *Bahula* (full), the bladder *Rayi* (wealth), the feet the earth, the chest the altar, the hairs the grass on the altar, the heart the *Garhapatya* fire, the mind the *Anvaharya* fire, the mouth the *Ahavaniya* fire.”

The exposition of *Vaisvanara* in this section suggests the Supreme Being as *Visvarupa*. In verse 4 of section ii of the second Mundaka of the Mundakopanishad, God's *Visvarupam* is also given in a miniature form. The author of the Bhagavadgita must have utilised these hints in deve-

loping his ideas in the world-famous *Visvarūpa darsanam* in chapter XI of the *Gita*.

In passing, it may also be noted from what has been recorded in this chapter that some of the profoundest teachings of the Upanishads originated with the Kshatriyas, and Brahmin teachers like Swetaketu and Uddalaka Aruni had to go to them for instruction.

Sixth Chapter. The whole chapter with its sixteen sections gives the teaching of Uddalaka Aruni to his son Swetaketu on what is called Monistic Absolutism or *Advaita Vada*, the unity of all existence.

First Section.

“ (1) Harih, Om. There lived once Swetaketu Arunya (the grandson of Aruna). To him his father (Uddalaka, son of Aruna), said : “ Swetaketu, go to school ; for there is none belonging to our race, darling, who not having studied (the Vedas) is, as it were, a Brahmana by birth only ”.

“ (2) Having begun his apprenticeship (with a teacher) when he was twelve years of age, Swetaketu returned to his father when he was twenty-four, having then studied all the Vedas,—conceited, considering himself well-read and stern.

“ (3) His father said to him : “ Swetaketu, as you are so conceited, considering yourself so well-read and so stern, my dear, have you ever asked for that instruction by which we hear what cannot be heard, by which we perceive what cannot be perceived, by which we know what cannot be known ? ”

“ (4) What is that instruction, Sir ? ” he asked. The father replied : “ My dear, as by one clod of clay, all that is made of clay is known, the difference being only a name, arising from speech, but the truth being that all is clay ;

“ (5) And as, my dear, by one nugget of gold, all that is made of gold is known, the difference being only a name arising from speech, but the truth being that all is gold ;

“ (6) And as, my dear, by one pair of nail scissors,

all that is made of iron (karshnayasad) is known, the difference being only a name arising from speech but the truth being that all is iron,—thus, my dear is that instruction ”.

“ (7) The son said : “ Surely those venerable men (my teachers) did not know that. For if they had known it, why should they not have told it to me? Do you, sir, therefore, tell me that :” “ Be it so,” said the father.”

It will be seen from the above exposition that the Reality of which all things are only modifications and which being known all things are virtually known, is to Aruni the Self, the same Self which every one of us calls his own self.

The second section establishes that Brahman is not only the efficient but also the material cause of the world,—the substance of which the things of the world are forms or appearances.

Says Raja Ram Mohan Roy in his *‘Abridgment of the Vedanta’* :

“ God is the efficient cause of the Universe, as a potter is of earthen pots, and He is also the material cause of it, the same as the earth is the material cause of the different earthen pots, or as a rope at an inadvertent view taken for a snake, is the material cause of the conceived existence of the snake, which appears to be true by the support of the real existence of the rope. So says the Vedanta, God is the efficient cause of the Universe, as well as the material cause thereof (as a spider of its web) ”, as the Veda has positively declared, “ That from a knowledge of God alone, a knowledge of every existing thing proceeds ”. Also the Veda compares the knowledge respecting the Supreme Being to a knowledge of the earth, and the knowledge respecting the different species existing in the Universe to the knowledge of earthen pots, which declaration and comparison prove the unity between the Supreme Being and the Universe and by the following declarations of the Veda, viz., “ The Supreme Being has of His sole intention created the Universe ”, it is evident that God is the wilful agent of all that can have existence. As the Veda says, that the Supreme Being intended (at the time of creation) to extend himself, it is evident that the Supreme Being is the origin of all matter, and its various appearances ; as the reflection of the sun’s meridian rays on sandy plains is the cause of the resemblance of an extended sea. The Veda says that “ All figures and their appellations are mere inventions,

and that the Supreme Being alone is real existence; consequently things that bear figure and appellation cannot be supposed the cause of the Universe."

This is what Max-Müller says on this and some subsequent sections dealing with creation.

"The father first explains how the *Sat* produced what we should call the three elements, *viz.*, fire, water and earth which he calls heat, water and food. Having produced them (ii-4), the *Sat* entered into them, but not with its real nature, but only with its living self" (iii-3) which is a reflection of the real *Sat*, as the sun in the water is a reflection of the real sun. By this apparent union of the *Sat* with the three elements, every form (*rupa*) and every name (*naman*) in the world was produced; and therefore, he who knows the three elements is supposed to know everything in this world, nearly in the same manner in which the Greeks imagined that through a knowledge of the elements, everything else became known (iv-7). The same three elements are shown to be also the constituent elements of man (v). Food or the earthly element is supposed to produce not only flesh but also mind; water not only blood, but also breath; heat not only bone but also speech. This is more or less fanciful; the important point, however, is this, that from the Brahmanic point of view, breath, speech and mind are purely elemental or external instruments, and require the support of the living self, the *Jivatman*, before they can act.

Having explained how the *Sat* produces progressively heat, how heat leads to water, water to earth, and how, by a peculiar mixture of the three, speech, breath and mind are produced, the teacher afterwards shows how in death, speech returns to mind, mind to breath, breath to heat and heat to the *Sat* (viii-6). This *Sat*, the root of everything, is called *paradevata*, the highest deity, not in the ordinary sense of the word deity, but as expressing the highest abstraction of the human mind. We must, therefore, translate it by the Highest Being, in the same manner as we translate *devata*, when applied to heat, water, and earth, not by deity, but by substance or element".

Second Section.

"(1) In the beginning, my dear, there was that only which is, one only, without a second. Others say, in the beginning, there was that only which is not, one only, without a second; and from that which is not, that which is was born."

"(2) But how could it be thus, my dear? The

father continued. "How could that which is, be born of that which is not? No, my dear, only that which is, was in the beginning, one only, without a second.

"(3) It thought, may I be many, may I grow forth. It sent forth fire. That fire thought, may I be many, may I grow forth. It sent forth water. And therefore whenever anybody anywhere is hot and perspires, water is produced on him from fire alone.

"(4) Water thought, may I be many, may I grow forth. It sent forth earth (food). Therefore, whenever it rains anywhere, most food is then produced. From water alone is eatable food produced."

Third Section.

"(1) Of all living things there are indeed three origins only, that which springs from an egg (oviparous), that which springs from a living being (viviparous) and that which springs from a germ.

"(2) That Being (i.e. that which had produced fire, water and earth) thought; let me now enter those three beings (fire, water, earth) with this living Self (*Jiva Atma*), and let me then reveal (develop) names and forms."

This living self (Jivatma) is only a shadow, as it were. Of the Highest Self; and as the sun, reflected in the water, does not suffer from the movement of the water, the real Self does not suffer pleasure or pain on earth, but the living self only.

"(3) Then that Being having said, let me make each of these three tripartite (So that fire, water and earth should each have itself for its principal ingredient, besides an admixture of the other two), entered into those three beings (*devata*) with this living self only, and revealed names and forms.

"(4) He made each of these tripartite; and how these three beings become each of them tripartite, that learn from me now, my friend."

Fourth Section.

“(1) The red colour of burning fire (agni) is the colour of fire, the white colour of fire is the colour of water, the black colour of fire the colour of earth. Thus vanishes what we call fire, as a mere variety, being a name, arising from speech. What is true (Satya) are the three colours (or forms).

“(2) The red colour of the sun (aditya) is the colour of fire, the white of water, the black of earth. Thus vanishes what we call the sun, as a mere variety being a name, arising from speech. What is true are the three colours.

“(3) The red colour of the moon is the colour of fire, the white of water, the black of earth. Thus vanishes what we call the moon, as a mere variety, being a name arising from speech. What is true are the three colours.

“(4) The red colour of the lightning is the colour of fire, the white of water, the black of earth. Thus vanishes what we call lightning, as a mere variety, being a name arising from speech. What is true are the three colours.

“(5) Great householders and great theologians of olden times who knew this, have declared the same, saying, “No one can henceforth mention to us anything which we have not heard, perceived or known.” Out of these (three colours or forms), they knew all.

“(6) Whatever they thought looked red, they knew was the colour of fire. Whatever they thought looked white, they knew was the colour of water. Whatever they thought looked black, they knew was the colour of earth.

“(7) Whatever they thought was altogether unknown, they knew was some combination of those three beings (devata) Now learn from me, my friend, how those three beings, when they reach man, become each of them tripartite.”

Fifth Section.

“(1) The earth (food) when eaten becomes three-fold ; its grossest portion becomes fæces, its middle portion flesh, its subtlest portion mind.

“(2) Water when drunk becomes three-fold; its grossest portion becomes water, its middle portion blood, its subtlest portion breath.

“(3) Fire (*i.e.*, in oil, butter, etc.) when eaten becomes three-fold; its grossest portion becomes bone, its middle portion marrow, its subtlest portion speech.

“(4) For truly, my child, mind comes of earth, breath of water, speech of fire. “Please, Sir, inform me still more” said the son. “Be it so, my child,” the father replied.”

Sixth Section.

“(1) That which is the subtle portion of curds, when churned, rises upwards, and becomes butter.

“(2) In the same manner, my child, the subtle portion of earth (food) when eaten, rises upwards and becomes mind.

“(3) That which is the subtle portion of water, when drunk, rises upwards and becomes breath.

“(4) That which is the subtle portion of fire, when consumed, rises upwards and becomes speech.

“(5) For, mind, my child, comes of earth, breath of water, speech of fire. “Please, Sir, inform me still more,” said the son. “Be it so, my child,” the father replied.”

That food is the root of the body is shown by Sankara in the following way :—Food when softened by water and digested becomes fluid, blood (sonita). From it comes flesh, from flesh fat, from fat bones, from bones marrow, from marrow seed. Food eaten by a woman becomes equally blood (lohita) and from seed and blood combined the new body is produced. The following geneological table is suggested to be kept in view to remember how man had emanated from the True, the Sat.

Sat
|
Tejas (fire)=Vak (Speech).
|
Ap (water)=Prana (breath).
|
Anna (earth)=Manas (mind).

Seventh Section.

“(1) Man (purusha), my son, consists of sixteen parts. Abstain from food for fifteen days, but drink as much water as you like, for breath comes from water, and will not be cut off, if you drink water.

“(2) Swetaketu abstained from food for fifteen days. Then he came to his father and said: “What shall I say?” The father said: “Repeat the Rik, Yajus, and Saman Verses.” He replied “They do not occur to me, Sir.”

“(3) The father said to him: “As of a great lighted fire one coal only of the size of a firefly may be left, which would not burn much more than this (*i.e.*, very little) thus, my dear son, one part only of the sixteen parts (of you) is left, and, therefore, with that one part you do not remember the Vedas. Go and eat.

“(4) Then wilt thou understand me.” Then Swetaketu ate and afterwards approached his father. And whatever his father asked him, he knew it all by heart. Then his father said to him:

“(5) As of a great lighted fire, one coal of the size of a firefly, if left, may be made to blaze up again by putting grass upon it and will thus burn more than this.

“(6) Thus, my dear son, there was one part of the sixteen parts left to you, that lighted up with food, burnt up, and by it you remember now the Vedas”. After that, he understood, what his father meant when he said: “Mind, my son, comes from food, breath from water, speech from fire. He understood what he said, yea, he understood it.”

On the theory of creation propounded by Aruni in the preceding sections 2 to 7, I reproduce below Sitanath Tattwabhusan's illuminating exposition:

“When the *Sat* thought before creation” let me become ‘*many*’ the ‘*many*’ were already in his thought. The *One*, indeed, has no meaning without relation to the *many* and thought is not an abstract unity but a unity-in-difference. Space with its relations of this and that, of here and there, cannot be thought of except in relation to

a *thought* which transcends these distinctions, transcends space. In the same manner, time with its now and then, before and after, is inconceivable without relation to the timeless. But the reverse also is true. The Infinite, the Eternal, the One, is inconceivable without relation to space, time and many. Creation, though not an impossibility or an inconceivability, is possible and conceivable only in the form of manifestation, existence in or as finite thought. Such creation is taking place every moment. The world is a perpetual process of creation. In all forms, creation presupposes an *Eternal Thought* reproducing itself in or as finite thought. The Vedic Brahma or Aparā Brahman coming out of the Para Brahman and the Greek or Christian Logos or "the only begotten son of God" coming out of the Father are two of the many forms which the philosophical conception of creation has assumed. In the light of the above explanation, Aruni's (*Tejas*) (fire) must be taken as manifested thought—thought in the form of finite experience. Aruni's second created being—*Ap* (water) seems to mean activity—attraction and repulsion. The third principle *anna* (food), the primary form of clay or earth and what seems to come out of it as our food, seems to represent the opaqueness and inertia of earth. The Sankhya doctrines of *Sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*, the description of their different functions in Sankhya treatises and in the *Bhagavadgita* seem to have been derived from Aruni's three fundamental principles of creation. But the radical difference of Kapila's (*Sankhya*) system from that of Aruni and the consequent difference in the nature of their fundamental principles must never be forgotten. While Aruni's *tejas*, *ap* and *anna* are spontaneous manifestations of a conscious and active Being, Kapila's *Sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas* are forms of an unconscious principle induced by the presence to it of personalities potentially conscious but inherently inactive and actually conscious only through their contact with it. The association of an intrinsically dualistic and atheistic system such as the *Sankhya* with the system of the Vedic Rishis was a fatal error and has wrought and is still working infinite mischief in Hindu philosophical thought. However, Aruni is uncompromising in the application of his idealism, however crude it may be, to the details of science and life as he understood them. He sees *tejas*, *ap*, and *anna* not only in sun, moon and lightning but also in man's body, life and mind. This may seem so much materialism to those who think realistically, or rather dualistically, but not so to Aruni, to whom food is not matter, but a differentiation of the ever-conscious *Sat*!

Eighth Section.

“(1) Uddalaka Aruni said to his son Svetaketu ‘Learn from me the true nature of sleep (Swapna). When a man sleeps here, then, my dear son, he becomes unit with the True, he is gone to his own (Self). Therefore they say *svapiti*, he sleeps, because he is gone (apita) to his own (sva).’ ”

Here, by sleep, the deep *sushupti* sleep is meant, which personal consciousness is lost, and the self for a time absorbed in the Highest Self. Sleep is produced by fatigue. Speech, mind, and the senses rest, breath only remains awake and the *Jiva*, the living soul, in order to recover from his fatigue, returns for a while to his true Self (*Atma*). The Self must be taken as a substance, nay, as the highest substance or subject, the Brahman.

“(2) As a bird when tied by a string flies first in every direction, and finding no rest anywhere settles down at last on the very place where it is fastened, exactly in the same manner, my son, that mind (the *Jiva* or living Self in the mind, (Chap. VI-3-2) after flying in every direction, and finding no rest anywhere, settles down on breath; for indeed, my son, mind is fastened to breath.

“(3) “Learn from me, my son, what are hunger and thirst.” When a man is thus said to be hungry, water is carrying away (digests) what has been eaten by him. Therefore, as they speak of a cow-leader (*go-naya*), a horse-leader (*asva-naya*), a man-leader (*purusha-naya*), so they call water which digests food and causes hunger food-leader (*asanaya*). Thus (by food digested, etc.) my son, know the offshoot (the body) to be brought forth, for this (body) cannot be without a root (cause).

“(4) And where could its root be except in food (earth). And in the same manner, my son, as food (earth) too is an offshoot, seek after its root, *viz.*, water. And as water too is an offshoot, seek after its root, *viz.*, fire. And as fire too

is an offshoot, seek after its root, *viz.*, the True. Yes, all these creatures, my son, have their root in the True, they dwell in the True, they rest in the True.

“ (5) When a man is thus said to be thirsty, fire carries away what has been drunk by him. Therefore, as they speak of a cow-leader (*go-naya*), of a horse-leader (*asva-naya*), of a man-leader (*purusha-naya*), so they call fire *Udanya*, thirst, *i.e.*, water-leader. Thus (by water digested etc.,) my son, know this offshoot (the body) to be brought forth ; this (body) could not be without a root (cause).

“ (6) And where could its root be except in water ? As water is an offshoot, seek after its root, *viz.*, fire. As fire is an offshoot, seek after its root, *viz.*, the True. Yes, all these creatures, O son, have their root in the True, they dwell in the true, they rest in the True. And how these three beings (*devata*), fire, water, earth, O son, when they reach man, become each of them tripartite has been said before (VI-4-7). When a man departs from hence, his speech is merged in his mind, his mind in his breath, his breath in heat (fire), heat in the Highest Being.

“ (7) Now that which is that subtle essence (the root of all), in it all that exists has its self. It is the True. It is the Self, and thou, O *Swetaketu*, art it.” “ Please, sir, inform me still more ” said the son. “ Be it so, my child ” the father replied.

At the beginning, of each section commencing from ix, Sankara supplies the question which the son is supposed to have asked his father.

Ninth Section.

The question supposed to have been asked by the son is: All creatures falling every day into deep sleep (sushupti) obtain thereby the Sat, the true being. How is it then that they do not know that they obtain the Sat everyday?

“ (1) As the bees, my son, make honey by collecting the juices of distant trees, and reduce the juice into one form ;

"(2) And as these juices have no discrimination so that they might say, I am the juice of this tree or that, in the same manner, my son, all these creatures, when they have become merged in the True (either in deep sleep or in death), know not that they are merged in the True.

"(3) Whatever these creatures are here, whether a lion, or a wolf, or a boar, or a worm, or a midge, or a gnat, or a mosquito, that they become again and again.

"(4) Now that which is that subtle essence, in it all that exists has its self. It is the True. It is the Self, and thou, O Swetaketu, art it." "Please, sir, inform me still more" said the son "Be it so, my child," the father replied.

Tenth Section.

The next question which the son is supposed to have asked is: If a man who has slept in his own house rises and goes to another village, he knows that he has come from his own house. Why then do people not know that they have come from the Sat?

"(1) These rivers, my son, run, the eastern (like the Ganga) towards the east, the western (like the Sindhu) towards the west. They go from sea to sea (*i.e.*, the clouds lift up the water from the sea to the sky and send it back as rain to the sea). They become indeed sea. And as those rivers, when they are in the sea do not know "I am this or that river";

"(2) In the same manner, my son, all these creatures, when they have come back from the True, know not that they have come back from the True. Whatever these creatures are here, whether a lion, or a wolf, or a boar, or a worm, or a midge, or a gnat, or a mosquito, that they become again and again.

"(3) That which is that subtle essence, in it all that exists has its self. It is the True. It is the Self, and Thou, O Swetaketu, art it." "Please, Sir, inform me still more" said the son. "Be it so, my child," the father replied.

• Eleventh Section.

The next question which the son is supposed to have asked :—Waves, foam, and bubbles arise from the water, and when they merge again in the water, they are gone. How is it that living beings when in sleep or death they are merged again in the Self are not destroyed?

“ (1) If some one were to strike at the root of this large tree, here, it would bleed, but live. If he were to strike its stem, it would bleed, but live. If he were to strike at its top, it would bleed, but live. Pervaded by the living Self, that tree stands firm drinking in its nourishment and rejoicing ;

“ (2) But if the life (the living Self) leaves one of its branches, that branch withers ; if it leaves a second, that branch withers ; if it leaves a third, that branch withers. If it leaves the whole tree, the whole tree withers. In exactly the same manner, my son, know this.” Thus he spoke.

“ (3) This (body) indeed withers and dies when the living Self has left it ; the living Self dies not. That which pervades that subtle essence, in it all that exists has its self. It is the True. It is the Self, and thou, Svetaketu art it”. “Please, my son, inform me still more ” said the son. “ Be it so, my child ” the father replied.”

Sankara remarks that according to the Veda trees are conscious, while Buddhists and followers of Kanada hold them to be unconscious. They live, because one sees how their sap runs and how it dries up, just as one sees the sap in a living body, which, as we saw, was produced by food and water. Therefore, the simile holds good. The life, or more correctly, the liver, the living Self, pervades the tree, as it pervades man, when it has entered the organism which produces breath, mind and speech. If any accident happens to a branch, the living Self draws himself away from that

branch, and then the branch withers. The sap which caused the living Self to remain, goes and the living Self goes away with it. The same applies to the whole tree. The tree dies when the living Self leaves it, but the living Self does not die ; it only leaves an abode which it had before occupied. Some other illustrations to show that the living Self remains are added by the Commentator : First, with regard to the living Self being the same when it awakes from deep sleep (*sushupti*), he remarks that we remember quite well that we have left something unfinished before we fell asleep. And then with regard to the living Self being the same when it awakes from death to a new life, he shows that creatures as soon as they are born take the breast and exhibit terror, which can only be explained, as he supposes, by their possessing a recollection of a former state of existence.

Twelfth Section.

The next question which Swetaketu is supposed to have asked his father is : How can this Universe which has the form and name of earth, etc., be produced from the Sat which is subtle and has neither form nor name ?

(1) Fetch me from thence a fruit of the Nyagrodha tree. "Here is one, Sir." "Break it." "It is broken, Sir" "What do you see there?" "These seeds almost infinitesimal." "Break one of them". "It is broken, Sir." "What do you see there?" "Not anything, Sir."

"(2) The father said : "My son, that subtle essence which you do not perceive there, of that very essence this, great Nyagrodha tree exists.

"(3) Believe it, my son. That which is the subtle essence, in it all that exists has its self. It is the True. It is the Self, and Thou, O Swetaketu, art it ". "Please, sir, inform me still more" said the son. "Be it so, my child," the father replied.

Thirteenth Section.

The question here asked is supposed to have been:—if the Sat is the root of all that exists, why is it not perceived?

“(1) Place this salt in water, and then wait on me in the morning.” The son did as he was commanded. The father said to him: “Bring me the salt, which you placed in the water last night.” The son having looked for it, found it not, for, of course it was melted.

“(2) The father said: “Taste it from the surface of the water. How is it?” The son replied: “It is salt.” “Taste it from the middle. How is it?” The son replied: “It is salt.” “Taste it from the bottom. How is it?” The son replied: “It is salt.” The father said: “Throw it away and then wait on me.” He did so; but salt exists for ever. Then the father said: “Here also in this body, forsooth, you do not perceive the True (*Sat*). my son; but there indeed it is.”

“(3) That which is the subtle essence, in it all that exists has its self. It is the True. It is the Self and thou, O Swetaketu, art it.” “Please, sir, inform me still more” said the son. “Be it so, my child,” the father replied.

Fourteenth Section.

The question here supposed to be asked is: The salt, though no longer perceptible by means of sight or touch, could be discovered by taste. Then how can the Sat be discovered, although it is imperceptible by all the senses?

“(1) As one might lead a person with his eyes covered away from the Gandharas, and leave him then in a place where there are no human beings; and as that person would turn towards the east or the north, or the west or the south and say “I have been brought here with my eyes covered, I have been left here with my eyes covered”.

“(2) And as thereupon some one might loosen his bandage and say to him, “Go in that direction, it is Gandhara, go in that direction”; and as thereupon, having been

informed and being able to judge for himself, he would by asking his way from village to village arrive at last at Gandhara,—in exactly the same manner does a man who meets with a teacher to inform him, obtain the true knowledge. For him there is only delay so long as he is not delivered (from the body); then he will be perfect”.

“(3) That which is the subtle essence, in it all that exists has its self. It is the True. It is the Self, and thou, O Swetaketu, art it.” “Please, sir, inform me still more” said the son. “Be it so, my child”, the father replied.

Sankara explains the simile in this section as follows :

“A man was carried away by robbers from his own country. After his eyes had been covered, he was taken to a forest full of terror and dangers arising from tigers, robbers, etc. Not knowing where he was and suffering from hunger and thirst, he began to cry, wishing to be delivered from his bands. Then a man took pity on him and removed his bands, and when he had returned to his home, he was happy. Next follows the application. Our real home is the true (*Sat*), the Self of the world. The forest into which we are driven is the body, made of the three elements, fire, water, earth, consisting of blood, flesh, bones, etc., and liable to cold, heat, and many other evils. The bands with which our eyes are covered are our desires for many things, real or unreal, such as wife, children, cattle, etc., while the robbers by whom we are driven into the forest are our good and evil deeds. Then, we cry and say : “I am the son of so and so, these are my relatives, I am happy, I am miserable, I am foolish, I am wise, I am just, I am born, I am dead, I am old, I am wretched, my son is dead, my fortune is gone, I am undone, how shall I live, where shall I go, who will save me ?” These and hundreds and thousands of other evils are the bands which blind us. Then, owing to some supererogatory good works we may have done, we suddenly meet a man who knows the Self of Brahman, whose own bands have been broken, who takes pity on us and shows us the way to see the evil which attaches to all that we love in this world. We then withdraw ourselves from all worldly pleasures. We learn that we are not mere creatures of the world, the son of so and so, etc., but that we are that which is the True (*Sat*). The bands of our ignorance and blindness are removed, and like the man of Gandhara, we arrive at our own home, the Self or the True. Then we are happy and blessed”.

Fifteenth Section.

The question supposed to have been asked in this section is this: By what degrees a man, who has been properly instructed in the knowledge of Brahman, obtains the Sat or returns to the True. To judge from the text, both he who knows the True and he who does not, reach, when they die, the Sat, passing from speech to mind and breath and heat (fire). But whereas he who knows remains in the Sat, they who do not know, return again to a new form of existence. It is important to observe that Sankara denies that he who knows, passes at his death through the artery of the head to the sun and then to the Sat. He holds that with him who knows there is no further cause for delay, and that as soon as he dies, he returns to the Sat direct.

“(1) If a man is ill, his relatives assemble round him and ask: “Dost thou know me? Dost thou know me?” Now as long as his speech is not merged in his mind, his mind in breath, breath in heat (fire), heat in the Highest Being (devata), he knows them.

“(2) But when his speech is merged in his mind, his mind in breath, breath in heat (fire), heat in the Highest Being, then he knows them not. That which is the subtle essence, in it all that exists has its self. It is the True. It is the Self, and Thou, O Swetaketu, art it.” “Please, Sir, inform me still more” said the son. “Be it so, my child,” the father replied.

Sixteenth Section.

The question supposed to have been asked of which this section is the answer, is:—Why does he who knows on obtaining the Sat, not return, while he who does not know, though obtaining the Sat in death, returns? An illustration is chosen which is intended to show how knowledge produces a material effect. The belief in the efficacy of ordeals must have existed at the time, and appealing to that belief, the teacher says that the man who knows himself guilty, is really burnt

by the heated iron, while the man who knows himself innocent, is not. In the same manner, the man who knows his Self to be the true Self, on approaching after death the true Self, is not repelled and sent back into a new existence, while he who does not know, is sent back into a new round of births and deaths. The man who tells a falsehood about himself loses his true Self and is burnt; the man who has a false conception about his Self, loses likewise his true Self, and not knowing the True Self, even though approaching it in death, he has to suffer till he acquires some day the true knowledge.

“(1) My child, they bring a man hither whom they have taken by the hand, and they say: “He has taken some thing, he has committed a theft”; (when he denies), they say, “Heat the hatchet for him.” If he committed the theft, then he makes himself to be what he is not. Then the false-minded having covered his true Self by a falsehood, grasps the heated hatchet—he is burnt, and he is killed.

“(2) But if he did not commit the theft, then he makes himself to be what he is. Then the true-minded having covered his true Self by truth, grasps the heated hatchet,—he is not burnt, and he is delivered. As that (truthful) man is not burnt, thus has all that exists its Self in that. It is the True. It is the Self, and Thou, O Swetaketu, art it.” He understood what he said. Yea, he understood it.

Seventh Chapter.

This chapter is made up of twenty-six sections, gives the teachings of sage Sanatkumara to Narada, an enquirer, who asked for instruction on the self. The latter is well versed in the Vedas and a number of sciences. Yet it looks strange that he should seek for instruction on the self. Why a man who knows the Veda should not know the Self, while in other places it is said that the Veda teaches the Self is well illustrated by Sankara's commentary. If a royal procession approaches, he says, then, though we do not see the king,

because he is hidden by flags, parasols, etc., yet we say, there is the king. And if we ask who is the king, then again, though we cannot see him and point him out, we can say, at least, that he is different from all that is seen. The Self is hidden in the Veda as a king is hidden in a royal procession. When questioned by Sanatkumara, Narada informs the sage of all that he had learned. The sage then said that whatever Narada had read was only a name, asked him to meditate on the name as Brahman (section i). He next leads him (in sections 2 to 14), successively along a scale of lower and higher *tattwas* or conceptions, teaches him that speech is better than a name, that mind is better than speech, that will is better than mind, that consideration is better than will, that reflection is better than consideration, that understanding is better than reflection, that power is better than understanding, that food is better than power, that water is better than food, that fire (*tejas*) is better than water, that ether (space) is better than fire, that memory is better than ether, that hope is better than memory, that spirit is better than hope and at last reaches the *Bhūman* or the Infinite. In other words, the Rishi leads the inquirer gradually from the lowest category, *naman* (name), through various intermediate categories to the highest and most comprehensive *Bhūman* or the Infinite, beyond which there can be nothing.

Fifteenth Section.

“(1) Spirit (*prana*) is better than hope. As the spokes of a wheel hold to the nave, so does all this (beginning with names and ending in hope) hold to spirit. That spirit moves by the spirit, it gives spirit to the spirit. Father means spirit, mother is spirit, brother is spirit, sister is spirit, tutor is spirit. Brahmana is spirit.

“(2) For if one says anything unbecoming to a father, mother, brother, sister, tutor or Brahmana, then people say, shame on thee! thou hast offended thy father, mother, brother, sister, tutor or a Brahmana.

“ (3) But, if after the spirit has departed from them, one shoves them together with a poker and burns them to pieces, no one would say, thou offendest thy father, mother, brother, sister, tutor or a Brahmana.

“ (4) Spirit then is all this. He who sees this, perceives this and understands this, becomes an *ativadin*. If people say to such a man, thou art an *ativadin*, he may say, I am an *ativadin*; he need not deny it ”.

Sections 23 to 26 give Sanatkumara's teachings on Bhuman, the Infinite.

Twenty-third section.

“ The Infinite (Bhuman) is Bliss. There is no bliss in anything finite. Infinity only is bliss. This infinity, however, we must desire to understand ”. “ Sir, I desire to understand it.”

Twenty-fourth Section.

“ (1) Where one sees nothing else, hears nothing else, understands nothing else, that is the Infinite. Where one sees something else, hears something else, understands something else, that is the finite. The Infinite is immortal, the finite is mortal ”. “ Sir, in what does the Infinite rest? ” “ In its own greatness—or not even in greatness.”

“ (2) In the world they call cows and horses, elephants and gold, slaves, wives, fields and houses greatness. I do not mean this ”, thus he spoke ; “ for in that case one being the (possessor) rests in something else, (but the Infinite cannot rest in something different from itself).”

Twenty-fifth Section.

“ (1) The Infinite indeed is below, above, behind, before, right and left—It is indeed all this. Now follows the explanation of the Infinite as the ‘ I ’ : I am below, I am above, I am behind, before, right and left—I am all this.

(2) Next follows the explanation of the Infinite as the Self : Self is below, above, behind, before, right and left—

Self is all this. He who sees, perceives, and understands this, loves the Self, delights in the Self, revels in the Self, rejoices in the Self—he becomes a Swaraj (an autocrat or self-ruler); he is lord and master in all the worlds. But those who think differently from this live in perishable worlds, and have other beings for their rulers.”

Twenty-sixth Section

“(1) To him who sees, perceives and understands this, the spirit (prana) springs from the Self, hope springs from the Self, memory springs from the Self. So do ether, fire, water, appearance and disappearance, food, power, understanding, reflection, consideration, will, mind, speech, names, sacred hymns and sacrifices—aye, all this springs from the Self.

“(2) There is this verse, “He who sees this does not see death, nor illness, nor pain; he who sees this, sees everything, obtains everything everywhere. He is one (before creation), he becomes three (fire, water, earth), he becomes five, he becomes seven, he becomes nine; then again he is called the eleventh, and hundred and ten and one thousand and twenty. When the intellectual aliment has been purified, the whole nature becomes purified. When the whole nature has been purified, the memory becomes firm. And when the memory (of the Highest Self) remains firm, then all the ties (which bind us to a belief in anything but the Self) are loosened.

“The Venerable Sanatkumara showed to Narada after his faults had been rubbed out, the other side of darkness. They call Sanatkumara Skanda, yea, Skanda they call him.”

From the definition of Bhuman, the Rishi gives in section 24, it will be seen that it is the highest of all conceptions including as it does all others in it. Next he gives the manner of realising the Bhuman in section 25. A better definition of the Infinite than the one given by Sanatkumara has not been given, says Max-Muller, by any modern philosopher.

Chapter VIII.

Chapter VIII which consists of fifteen sections specifies the distinction between the body and the soul or self. At death the soul goes out leaving behind the body. Max-Müller has an interesting note on this chapter which is reproduced below :—

“ The eighth Prapathaka (chapter) seems to form a kind of appendix to the Upanishad. The highest point that can be reached by speculation had been reached in the seventh Prapathaka, the identity of our Self and of every thing else with the Highest Self. This speculative effect, however, is too much for ordinary people. They cannot conceive the Sat or Brahman as out of space and time, as free from all qualities, and in order to help them, they are taught to adore the Brahman, as it appears in space and time, an object endowed with certain qualities, living in nature and in the human heart. The Highest Brahman, besides which there is nothing, and which can neither be reached as an object nor be considered as an effect, seems to ordinary minds like a thing which is not. Therefore, while the true philosopher, after acquiring the knowledge of the Highest *Sat*, becomes identified with it suddenly like lightning, the ordinary mortal must reach it by slow degrees, and as a preparation for that higher knowledge which is to follow, the eighth Prapathaka, particularly the first portion of it has been added to the teaching contained in the earlier books.”

First Section.

“ (1) Harih, Om. There is this City of Brahman (the body) and in the palace, the small lotus (of the heart), and in it that small ether. Now what exists within that small ether, that is to be sought for, that is to be understood.

“ (2) And if they should say to him : “ Now with regard to that City of Brahman, and the palace in it, *i.e.*, the small lotus of the heart and the small ether within the heart, what is there within it that deserves to be sought for, or that is to be understood? ”

“ (3) Then he should say ; As large as this ether (all space) is, so large is that ether within the heart. Both heaven and earth are contained within it, both fire and air, both sun and moon, both lightning and stars ; and whatever there is

of him (the Self) here in the world, and whatever is not (*i.e.*, whatever has been or will be), all that is contained within it.

“ (4) And if they should say to him : “ If everything that exists is contained in that city of Brahman, all beings and all desires (whatever can be imagined or desired), then what is left of it, when old age reaches it and scatters it, or when it falls to pieces?

“ (5) Then he should say : “ By the old age of the body, that (the ether or Brahman within it) does not age by the death of the body, that (the ether, or Brahman within it) is not killed. That (the Brahman) is the true Brahman-city (not the body). In it all desires are contained. It is the Self, free from sin, free from old age, from death and grief, from hunger and thirst, which desires nothing but what it ought to desire, and imagines nothing but what it ought to imagine. Now as here on earth people follow as they are commanded, and depend on the object which they are attached to, be it a country or a piece of land.

“ (6) And as here on earth, whatever has been acquired by exertion perishes, so perishes whatever is acquired for the next world by sacrifices and other good actions performed on earth. Those who depart from hence without having discovered the Self and those true desires, for them there is no freedom in all the worlds. But those who depart from hence, after having discovered the Self and those true desires, for them there is freedom in all the worlds.”

Third Section.

“ (3) That Self abides in the heart. And this is the etymological explanation. The heart is called hridayam, instead of hridy-ayam, *i.e.*, He who is in the heart. He who is in the heart, He who knows this, that He is in the heart goes day by day (when in sushupti, deep sleep) into heaven (svarga) *i.e.*, into the Brahman of the heart.

“ (4) Now that serene Being which, after having risen from this earthly body and having reached the highest light

(self-knowledge) appears in its true form, that is the Self, thus he spoke (when asked by his pupils). This is the immortal, the fearless, this is Brahman. And of that Brahman, the name is the True, Satyam.

“(5) This name Satyam consists of three syllables *sat-ti-yam*. *Sat* signifies the immortal, *ti* the mortal, and with *yam*, he binds both, because he binds both, the immortal and the mortals, therefore it is *yam*. He who knows this goes day by day into heaven (svarga).”

Fourth Section.

“(1) That Self is a bank, a boundary, so that the worlds may not be confounded. Day and night do not pass that bank, nor old age, death and grief; neither good nor evil deeds. All evil-doers turn back from it, for the world of Brahman is free from all evil.

“(2) Therefore he who has crossed that bank, if blind ceases to be blind; if wounded, ceases to be wounded; if afflicted, ceases to be afflicted. Therefore when that bank has been crossed, night becomes day indeed, for the world of Brahman is lighted up once for all.

“(3) And that world of Brahman belongs to those only who find it by abstinence—for them there is freedom in all the worlds.”

Sixth Section.

“(4) And when a man falls ill, then those who surround him, say: “Do you know me? Do you know me?” As long as he has not departed from this body, he knows them.

“(5) But when he departs from this body, then he departs upwards by those very rays (towards the worlds which he has gained by merit, not by knowledge) or he goes out while meditating on *Om* (and thus securing an entrance into the Brahma loka). And while his mind is failing, he is going to the sun. For the sun is the door of the world (of Brahman). Those who know walk in; those who do not know

are shut out. There is this verse : “ There are a hundred and one arteries of the heart ; one of them penetrates the crown of the head ; moving upwards by it a man reaches the immortal ; the others serve for departing in different directions, yea, in different directions.”

In Sections 7 to 13, a dialogue between Prajapati (a Deva Rishi), Indra and Virochana, the distinction between the body and the soul is further emphasised. Here the highest problem is treated again, the knowledge of the true Self, which leads beyond the world of Brahma and enables the individual self to return to the Highest Self. See Chap. IX of Part I, *supra*.

Seventh Section.

“ (1) Prajapati said : “ The Self which is free from sin, free from old age, from death and grief, from hunger and thirst, which desires nothing but what it ought to desire, and imagines nothing but what it ought to imagine, that it is which we must search out, that it is which we must try to understand. He who has searched out that Self and understands it, obtains all worlds and all desires.”

“ (2) The devas (gods) and asuras (demons) both heard these words, and said : “ Well, let us search for that Self by which, if one has searched it out, all worlds and all desires are obtained.”

Thus saying Indra went from the devas, Virochana from the asuras, and both without having communicated with each other, approached Prajapati holding fuel in their hands, as is the custom for pupils approaching their master.

“ (3) They dwelt there as pupils for thirty-two years. Then Prajapati asked them “ For what purpose have you both dwelt here ? ” They replied : “ A saying of yours is being repeated, *viz.*, “ The Self which is free from sin, free from old age, free from death and grief, from hunger and thirst, which desires nothing but what it ought to desire, and imagines nothing but what it ought to imagine, that it is

which we must search out, that it is which we must try to understand. He who has searched out that Self and understands it, obtains all worlds and all desires." Now we both have dwelt here because we wish for that Self".

"Prajapati said to them: "The person that is seen in the eye, that is the Self. This is what I have said. This is the immortal, the fearless, this is Brahman." They asked: "Sir, he who is perceived in the water and he who is perceived in the mirror, who is he?" He replied: "He himself indeed is seen in all these."

According to Sankara, Prajapati means by the person that is seen in the eye the real agent of seeing, who is seen by sages only even with their eyes shut. His pupils, however, misunderstand him. They think of the person that is seen, not of the person that sees. The person seen in the eye is to them the small figure imagined in the eye, and they go on therefore to ask, whether the image in the water or in a mirror is not the Self.

Eighth Section.

"(1) Look at yourself in a pan of water, and whatever you do not understand of your Self, come and tell me." They looked in the water-pan. Then Prajapati said to them: "What do you see?" They said: "We both see the Self thus altogether a picture even to the very hairs and nails."

"(2) Prajapati said to them: "After you have adorned yourselves, have put on your best clothes and cleaned yourselves, look again into the water-pan". They after having adorned themselves, having put on their best clothes and cleaned themselves, looked into the water-pan. Prajapati said: "What do you see?"

"(3) They said: "Just as we are well adorned with our best clothes and clean, thus we are both there, sir, well adorned with our best clothes and clean." Prajapati said: "That is the Self, this is the immortal, the fearless, this is Brahman." Then both went away satisfied in their hearts.

“ (4) And Prajapati, looking after them said : “ They both go away without having perceived and without having known the Self, and whoever of these two, whether devas or asuras will follow this doctrine (Upanishad), will perish.’ Now Virochana, satisfied in his heart, went to the asuras and preached that doctrine to them, that the self (the body) alone is to be worshipped, that the Self (the body) alone is to be served, and that he who worships the Self and serves the Self gains both worlds, this and the next.

“ (5) Therefore, they call even now a man who does not give alms here, who has no faith and offers no sacrifices, an asura, for this is the doctrine (Upanishad) of the asuras. They deck out the body of the dead with perfumes, flowers, and fine raiment by way of ornament and think they will thus conquer that world.”

Ninth Section.

“ (1) But Indra, before he had returned to the devas saw this difficulty. As this self (the shadow) in the water is well adorned, when the body is well adorned, well dressed when the body is well dressed, well cleaned, when the body is well cleaned, that self will also be blind if the body is blind, lame, if the body is lame, crippled, if the body is crippled and will perish in fact as soon as the body perishes. Therefore I see no good in this (doctrine).”

Sankara remarks that both Indra and Virochana had mistaken the true import of what Prajapati said, yet while Virochana took the body to be the Self, Indra thought the Self was the shadow of the body.

“ (2) Taking fuel in his hand, he came again as a pupil to Prajapati. Prajapati said to him : “ Maghavat (Indra), as you went away with Virochana, satisfied in your heart, for what purpose did you come back ?” He said : “ Sir, as this self (the shadow) is well adorned, when the body is well adorned, well dressed, when the body is well dressed, well cleaned, if the body is well cleaned, that self will also be

blind, if the body is blind, lame, if the body is lame, crippled, if the body is crippled, and will perish, in fact as soon as the body perishes. Therefore, I see no good in this (doctrine)."

"(3) So it is indeed, Maghavat" replied Prajapati "but I shall explain him (the true Self) further to you. Live with me another thirty-two years." He lived with him another thirty-two years and then Prajapati said:

Tenth Section.

"(1) He who moves about happy in dreams, he is the Self, this is the immortal, the fearless, this is Brahman". Then Indra went away satisfied in his heart. But before he had returned to the devas, he saw this difficulty. Although it is true that that self is not blind, even if the body is blind, nor lame, if the body is lame, though it is true that that self is not rendered faulty by the faults of it (the body);

"(2) Nor struck when it (the body) is struck, nor lamed, when it is lamed, yet it is as if they struck him (the self) in dreams, as if they chased him. He becomes even conscious, as it were, of pain and sheds tears. Therefore, I see no good in this.

"(3) Taking fuel in his hands, he went again as a pupil to Prajapati. Prajapati said to him: "Maghavat, as you went away satisfied in your heart, for what purpose did you come back?" He said: "Sir, although it is true that that self is not blind, even if the body is blind, nor lame, if the body is lame, though it is true that that self is not rendered faulty by the faults of it (the body);

"(4) Nor struck when it (the body) is struck, nor lamed, when it is lamed, yet it is as if they struck him (the self) in dreams, as if they chased him. He becomes even conscious as it were, of pain and sheds tears. Therefore I see no good in this". "So it is indeed, Maghavat" replied Prajapati: "but I shall explain him (the true Self) further to you. Live with me for another thirty-two years". He lived with him another thirty-two years. Then Prajapati said:

Eleventh Section.

“(1) When a man being asleep, reposing, and at perfect rest, sees no dreams, that is the Self, this is the immortal, the fearless, this is Brahman”. Then Indra went away satisfied in his heart. But before he had returned to the devas, he saw this difficulty. In truth he thus does not know himself (his self) that he is ‘I’, nor does he know anything that exists. He is gone to utter annihilation. I see no good in this.

“(2) Taking fuel in his hand, he went again as a pupil to Prajapati. Prajapati said to him : “Maghavat, as you went away satisfied in your heart, for what purpose did you come back?” He said : “Sir, in that way he does not know himself (his self) that he is ‘I’, nor does he know anything that exists. He is gone to utter annihilation. I see no good in this”.

“(3) “So it is indeed, Maghavat”, replied Prajapati, “but I shall explain him (the true Self) further to you, and nothing more than this. Live here another five years”. He lived there another five years. This made in all one hundred and one years and therefore it is said that Indra Maghavat lived one hundred and one years as a pupil with Prajapati.”

Twelfth Section.

“Prajapati said to Indra :

“(1) Maghavat, this body is mortal and always held by death. It is the abode of that Self which is immortal and without body; when in the body (by thinking this body is ‘I’ and I am this body) the Self is held by pleasure and pain. So long as he is in the body, he cannot get free from pleasure and pain. But when he is free of the body (when he knows himself different from the body), then neither pleasure nor pain touches him.

“(2) The wind is without body, the cloud, lightning and thunder are without body (without hands, feet, etc.) Now as these, arising from this heavenly ether (space) appear

in their own form, as soon as they have approached the highest light;

“(3) Thus does that serene being, arising from this body, appear in its own form, as soon as it has approached the highest light (the knowledge of Self). He (in that state) is the highest person (*uttama purusha*). He moves about there laughing (or eating), playing and rejoicing (in his mind), be it with women, carriages, or relatives, never minding that body into which he was born. Like as a horse attached to a cart, so is the spirit (*prana*, *pragnatman*) attached to this body.”

These are pleasures which seem hardly compatible with the state of perfect peace which the self is supposed to have attained. Max-Muller thinks that this passage may have been interpolated, or put on to show that the self enjoys such pleasures as an inward spectator only, without identifying himself with either pleasure or pain. He sees them as he says afterwards, with his divine eye. The self perceives in all things his Self only, nothing else. In his commentary on Taittiriya Upanishad, Sankara refers this passage to Brahman as an effect, not to Brahman as a cause. The spirit, the conscious self is not identical with the body but only joined to it, like a horse, or driving it, like a charioteer. In other passages, the senses are the horses, *budhi* (reason) the charioteer, *manas* (mind) the reins. The spirit is attached to the cart by the *chetana*.

“(4) Now where the sight has entered into the void (the open space, the black pupil of the eye), there is the person of the eye, the eye itself is the instrument of seeing. He who knows, let me smell this, he is the Self, the nose is the instrument of smelling. He who knows, let me say this, he is the Self, the tongue is the instrument of saying. He who knows, let me hear this, he is the Self, the ear is the instrument of hearing.

“(5) He who knows, let me think this, he is the Self,

the mind is his divine eye. He, the Self, seeing these pleasures (which to others are hidden like a buried treasure of gold) through his divine eye, i.e., the mind, rejoices.

“The devas who are in the world of Brahman meditate on that self (as taught by Prajapati to Indra and by Indra to the devas). Therefore all worlds belong to them, and all desires. He who knows that Self and understands it, obtains all worlds and all desires.” Thus said Prajapati, yea, thus said Prajapati.”

Thirteenth Section.

“(1) From the dark (the Brahman of the heart) I come to the nebulous (the world of Brahman), from the nebulous to the dark, shaking off all evil, as a horse shakes his hairs, and as the moon frees herself from the mouth of Rahu. Having shaken off the body, I obtain, self made and satisfied, the uncreated world of Brahman, yea, I obtain it.”

I reproduce below relevant portions of the illuminating exposition of Tattwabhushan on the verses of the twelfth section.

“Here the Rishi distinguishes between the body and the self and also between an embodied and an unembodied being. The distinction here made is a relative and not an absolute one. According to the Upanishads there is no such thing as matter, the world being, to them, entirely spiritual. It is also a part of that view that there is no such event as death, what people call death being only a change of state. That the body according to this view, is not absolutely different from the self, is evident from the Rishi's statement, besides other proofs in its favour, that the body is the abode (adhistanam) of the self. This abode is always occupied by the self, for nothing can exist except in relation to the self. In whatever condition the body may be, it always rests in the Universal Self, who cannot cut off his connection with anything. In this sense, He too is embodied. Why then does the Rishi draw a distinction between an embodied and an unembodied self? The reason for this distinction is that the unenlightened individual self regards itself as confined to its body and cannot give up the wrong idea of identifying the self and the body. The Universal Self, though occupying all bodies knows that He is not confined to any (particular) body and is in this sense unembodied

The enlightened individual self too, conscious of its real nature, does not regard itself as embodied. However, let us now attend to the last word said by the Rishi, that about freedom from pleasure and pain. Before describing this state of freedom, he gives an example of unembodiedness. According to him, the air, the clouds, lightning and thunder are unembodied in the sense that they have no particular forms and no limbs like hands and feet. In winter, as they cannot have enough of the sun's rays, they remain merged in ether and cannot show their special natures. At the end of the cold season, they, helped by the solar rays manifest themselves in their own characters. This view is indeed not in accordance with modern science. We may not accept the Rishi's science but the illustration he gives is not quite inapt. As the clouds, lightning, etc., owing to the insufficiency of the solar rays, remain merged in ether, so that they cannot be distinguished from the latter, but on gaining a sufficient quantity of the sun's rays, appear in their real natures, so as long as the individual self ignorantly identifies itself with the body, it does not see its real nature. But when it sees the Supreme Light, it shines in its real nature, and in spite of living in the world, regards itself as liberated. As the Rishi says :—"So this self, perfectly purified, rising from this body (i.e., ceasing to identify itself with it) and endowed with the supreme light, shines in its own form. Then it becomes the highest person (i.e., acquires the highest excellence owing to a feeling of unity with Brahman). It then moves about eating (or laughing), playing or rejoicing, in the company of women, or riding in a coach, or in association with his kinsmen. He forgets the body in which he was born (i.e., appeared). As a horse or a bullock is yoked to a car, so is this life attached to the body (i.e., the connection is temporary and not permanent).

To show that even when this connection ceases, the self's knowledge and activity continue, the Rishi distinguishes between the self and its organs :—

"Where in the ether (i.e., in the pupil of the eye) the eye has entered, there is the person of the eye, the seer. The eye is the instrument for seeing. He who thinks 'I smell this' is the self. The nose is the instrument for smelling. He who thinks, 'I say this' is the self, speech is the instrument for speaking. He who thinks 'I hear this' is the self. The ear is the instrument for hearing." The five organs of knowledge and the five of action, i.e., the powers of knowing and acting are really various powers of the mind. Knowledge and action are mere forms of mental activity. So the Rishi calls mind 'the celestial eye'. Of the mind, he says: "He who knows

“ I think ” is the self ; the mind is his celestial eye. Verily, with this celestial eye, he sees and enjoys the objects of desire which are in the world of Brahman ”. Prajapati’s “ Brahmaloka ” (the world as seen from the divine standpoint, i.e., with enlightened eye freed from the misconceptions of popular ignorance) is all-pervasive, including both ‘ here ’ and ‘ hereafter ’. Where ends the ‘ here ’ and the ‘ hereafter ’ begins, he does not say clearly. But his last words seem to refer to the ‘ hereafter.’ He says that the Devas worship that Self (i.e., the Supreme Self) and so they obtain all worlds and all objects of desire, and that he who seeks after and knows that Self, attains all worlds and all objects of desire.”

CHAPTER II. THE BRIHADARANYAKOPANISHAD

Chronologically, *Brihadaranyakopanishad* seems, as already stated in Chapter I of this Part, to be almost contemporaneous with *Chandogya*, though the latter is somewhat earlier. The same Rishis, the same stories and parables appear in both. It is evident that these are different versions of the same tradition. The *Chandogya* and *Brihadaranyaka* must have been completed at different localities at no distant date from each other. Rishi Yajnavalkya, however, who is not mentioned in *Chandogya*, finds a prominent place in *Brihadaranyaka*. The latter Upanishad must therefore be a little later. Besides, in the *Brihadaranyaka* the central ideas of the Upanishads have taken a more definite and systematic shape. The unity and all-pervasiveness of the Supreme Reality is declared with stronger emphasis. There is less of the tendency to identify the Supreme Reality with any of the Vedic deities. *Brihadaranyaka* consists of six chapters.

Chapter I.

This chapter consists of six Brahmanas. The well-known prayer “ *Pavamana Mantram* ” beginning with “ *Asato-masadgamaya* ” is contained in verse 27 of the third Brahmana. “ Lead me from the unreal to the real : Lead me from darkness to light ! lead me from death to immortality ! ” Now, when he (the priest) says, “ Lead me from the unreal to the

real," the unreal is verily death, the real immortality. He, therefore says, "Lead me from death to immortality, make me immortal." When he says, "Lead me from darkness to light, darkness is verily death, light immortality. He, therefore, says, "Lead me from death to immortality, make me immortal." When he says, "Lead me from death to immortality", there is nothing there, as it were, hidden (obscure, requiring explanation").

Fourth Brahmana

"(1) In the beginning this was Self alone, in the shape of a person (purusha). He, looking round, saw nothing but his Self. He first said, "This is I"; therefore he became 'I' by name. Therefore even now, if a man is asked, he first says, "This is I," and then pronounces the other names which he may have. And because before (purva) all this, he (the Self) burnt down (ush) all evils, therefore, he was a person (pur-usha). Verily, he who knows this, burns down every one who tries to be before him."

"(8) This, which is nearer to us than anything, this Self, is dearer than a son, dearer than wealth, dearer than all else. If one were to say to one who declares another than the Self dear, that he will lose what is dear to him, very likely it would be so. Let him worship the Self alone as dear. He who worships the Self alone as dear, the object of his love will never perish."

Chapter II.

This chapter consists of six Brahmanas.

The first Brahmana records the visit of the proud Brahmana Gargya Balaki, a man of great learning, to Raja Rishi Ajatasatru, king of Kasi, and his exposition of *Brahma-vada* to the king. He starts telling the king that he adores as Brahman first the person that is in the sun, then the moon, and successively light, ether, wind, fire, water, mirror, sound, space, shadow, body; and confesses that he could not proceed

further. The king dissatisfied with this imperfect explanation teaches him true theism, the Brahman as the Self.

"(14) Ajatasatru said : " Thus far only". " Thus far only", he replied. Ajatasatru said : " This does not suffice to know it (the true Brahman)." Gargya replied : " Then let me come to you as a pupil."

"(15) Ajatasatru said : " Verily it is unnatural that a Brahmana should come to a Kshatria, hoping that he should tell him the Brahman. However, I shall make you know him clearly", thus saying, he took him by the hand and rose.

And the two together came to a person who was asleep. He called him by these names : " Thou, great one, clad in white raiment, Soma King." He did not rise. Then rubbing him with his hand, he woke him, and he arose.

"(16) Ajatasatru said : " When this man was thus asleep, where was then the person (purusha), the intelligent? and from whence did he thus come back?" Gargya did not know this.

"(17) Ajatasatru said : " When this man was thus asleep, then the intelligent person (purusha) having through the intelligence of the senses (pranas) absorbed within himself all intelligence, lies in the ether which is in the heart. When he takes in these different kinds of intelligence, then it is said that the man sleeps (svapiti). Then the breath is kept in, speech is kept in, the ear is kept in, the eye is kept in, the mind is kept in.

"(18) But when he moves about in sleep (and dreams), then these are his worlds. He is, as it were, a great king ; he is, as it were, a great Brahmana ; he rises, as it were, and falls. And as a great king might keep in his own subjects, and move about according to his pleasure, within his own domain, thus does that person (who is endowed with intelligence) keep in the various senses (pranas) and move about, according to his pleasure, within his own body (while dreaming).

“(19) Next, when he is in profound sleep and knows nothing, there are the seventy-two thousand arteries called Hita, which from the heart spread through the body. Through them he moves forth and rests in the surrounding body. And as a young man, or a great king or a great Brahmana, having reached the summit of happiness, might rest, so does he then rest.

“(20) As the spider comes out with its thread, or as small sparks come forth from fire, thus do all senses, all worlds, all devas, all beings come forth from that Self. The Upanishad (the true name and doctrine) of that Self is “the True of the True”. Verily the senses are the true, and he is the true of the true”.

Fourth Brahmana.

The fourth Brahmana is named the *Maitreyi Brahmana* in which BrahmaRishi Yajnavalkya expounds to his wife, Maitreyi, his views on the nature of the self, on immortality and the unity of God-head. Please see Chap. VIII of Part I of this Manual.

“(1) Now when Yajnavalkya was going to enter upon another state, he said: “Maitreyi, verily I am going away from this my house (into the forest). Forsooth let me make a settlement between thee and that Katyayani (my other wife).

“(2) Maitreyi said: “My lord, if this whole earth full of wealth, belonged to me, tell me, should I be immortal by it?” “No” replied Yajnavalkya; “like the life of rich people will be thy life. But there is no hope of immortality by wealth.”

“(3) And Maitreyi said: “What should I do with that by which I do not become immortal? What my Lord knoweth (of immortality), tell that to me.”

“(4) Yajnavalkya replied: “Thou who art truly dear to me, thou speakest dear words. Come, sit down, I will explain it to thee, and mark well what I say.”

“(5) And he said : “ Verily, a husband is not dear that you may love the husband ; but that you may love the Self, therefore, a husband is dear. Verily, a wife is not dear that you may love the wife, but that you may love the Self, therefore, a wife is dear. Verily, sons are not dear that you may love the sons ; but that you may love the Self, therefore, the sons are dear. Verily, wealth is not dear that you may love wealth, but that you may love the Self, therefore, wealth is dear. Verily, the Brahman-class is not dear, that you may love the Brahman-class, but that you may love the Self, therefore, the Brahman-class is dear. Verily, the Kshatriya-class is not dear that you may love the Kshatriya-class ; but that you may love the Self, therefore, the Kshatriya-class is dear. Verily, the worlds are not dear, that you may love the worlds ; but that you may love the Self, therefore, the worlds are dear. Verily, the Devas are not dear, that you may love the Devas ; but that you may love the Self, therefore, the Devas are dear. Verily, creatures are not dear that you may love the creatures ; but that you may love the Self, therefore, are creatures dear. Verily, everything is not dear that you may love everything ; but that you may love the Self, therefore, everything is dear. **Verily, the Self is to be seen, to be heard, to be perceived, to be marked, O Maitreyi! when we see, hear, perceive, and know the Self, then all this is known.**”

This most remarkable verse that has ever proceeded from the lips of man forms the basis of the Upanishadic doctrine of love. For an exposition of this matter, please see chapters XV and XX of Part I of this Manual.

The concluding portion of the same fifth verse also forms the basis of the four stages of Upanishadic spiritual culture known to the Vedantists as *Sravana*, *Manana*, *Nididhyasana* and *Darsana*, as explained in chapter XIV of Part I of this Manual.

In passing, it may also be stated that the moral and

spiritual exercises indispensable for the acquisition of the Science of God, had been in later times, formulated into what is called the *Sadhana Chatustaya*, the four-fold discipline. Before instilling into the minds of their disciples the principles of divine science, the Rishis led them through a course of preliminary training somewhat on the lines of *Sadhana Chatustaya*. In his commentary on the *Brahma Sutras*, Sankara explains the system as follows :—

The four-fold system of spiritual culture comprises (1) the discrimination of things eternal and temporal called *Viveka* ; (2) indifference to enjoying the fruits of actions here or hereafter, called *Vairagya* ; (3) the spiritual acquisitions, *sama*, *dama*, *uparati*, *titiksha*, *samadhana*, *sraddha*, called *satsampatti* ; (4) desire for liberation. *Sama* is drawing away the mind from earthly things. *Dama* is restraining the external senses. *Uparati* is giving up, for the sake of the higher knowledge, the prescribed duties called *nitya* (habitual) and others. *Titiksha* is enduring the correlatives of heat, cold, etc. *Samadhana* is the steadiness of the mind arising from giving up sleepiness, laziness and inattention. *Sraddha* is trustful respect for all higher things.

I shall now continue the teaching of Yajnavalkya on the doctrine of love based on the unity of the finite self with the Universal Self in the next verse, *i.e.*, the sixth.

“(6) Whosoever looks for the Brahman-class elsewhere than in the Self, was abandoned by the Brahman-class. Whosoever looks for the Kshatriya-class elsewhere than in the Self, was abandoned by the Kshatriya class. Whosoever looks for the worlds elsewhere than in the Self, was abandoned by the worlds. Whosoever looks for the Devas elsewhere than in the Self was abandoned by the Devas. Whosoever looks for the creatures elsewhere than in the Self, was abandoned by the creatures. Whosoever looks for anything elsewhere than in the Self was abandoned by everything. This Brahman class, this Kshatriya-class, these worlds, these Devas, these creatures, this everything, all is that Self.”

Yajnavalkya next proceeds to show that nothing is truly known unless it is seen in relation to the Self and that the Self is the one concrete Reality, whereas what are popularly known

as realities are abstractions. He illustrates this truth by a few apt examples.

“(7) Now as the sounds of a drum, when beaten cannot be seized externally (by themselves) but the sound is seized, when the drum is seized or the beater of the drum ;

“(8) And as the sounds of a conch-shell, when blown, cannot be seized externally (by themselves), but the sound is seized, when the shell is seized or the blower of the shell ;

“(9) And as the sounds of a lute, when played cannot be seized externally (by themselves) but the sound is seized, when the lute is seized or the player of the lute.

“(10) As clouds of smoke proceed by themselves out of a lighted fire kindled with damp fuel, thus verily, O Maitreyi, has been breathed forth from this great Being what we have as Rig Veda, Yajur-Veda, Sama-Veda, Atharvangirasas Ithihasa (legends), Purana (cosmogonies), Vidya (knowledge), the Upanishads, Slokas (verses), Sutras (prose rules), Anuryakhayanas (glosses), Vyakhanas (commentaries). From Him alone all these were breathed forth.

“(11) As all waters find their centre in the sea, all touches in the skin, all tastes in the tongue, all smells in the nose, all colours in the eye, all sounds in the ear, all percepts in the mind, all knowledge in the heart, all actions in the hands, all movements in the feet, and all the Vedas in speech,—

“(12) As a lump of salt, when thrown into water, becomes dissolved in the water, and could not be taken out again, but wherever we taste (the water) it is salt,—thus verily, O Maitreyi, does this great Being, endless, unlimited, consisting of nothing but knowledge, rise from out of these elements and vanish again in them. When he has departed, there is no more knowledge (name). I say, O Maitreyi ”. Thus spoke Yajnavalkya.

“(13) Then Matireyi said: “Here thou hast bewildered me, Sir, when thou sayest that having departed there is no more knowledge.” But Yajnavalkya replied :

"O Maitreyi, I say nothing that is bewildering. This is enough, O beloved, for wisdom. For when there is, as there were duality, then one sees the other, one smells the other, one hears the other, one salutes the other, one perceives the other, one knows the other ; but when the Self only is this, how should he smell another, how should he see another, how should he hear another, how should he salute another, how should he perceive another, how should he know another? How should he know Him by whom he knows all this? He, O beloved, should he know (himself) the knower?"

The fifth Brahmana is called *Madhu Brahma*. It teaches what is known as the *Madhu Vidya*, the science of honey. A Rishi named Dadhyak Atharvana is said to have proclaimed this science to two asvins. According to Max-Muller, "Madhu, honey, seems to be taken here as an instance of something which is both cause and effect, or rather of things which are mutually dependent on each other and cannot exist without one other. As the bees make the honey and the honey makes or supports the bees, bees and honey are both cause and effect, or at all events are mutually dependent on one other. In the same way the earth and living beings are looked upon as mutually dependent, living beings presupposing the earth and the earth presupposing living beings."

"Verse 1. This earth is the honey (madhu, the effect) of all beings, and all beings are the honey (madhu, the effect) of this earth. Likewise this bright, immortal person in this earth, as that bright immortal person incorporated in the body (both are madhu). He indeed is the same as that Self, that Immortal, that Brahman, that All.

"(2) This water is the honey of all beings and all beings are the honey of this water. Likewise this bright immortal person in this water, and that bright immortal person exist as seed in the body (both are madhu). He indeed is the same as that Self, that Immortal that Brahman, that All."

In Verses 3 to 13, the Rishi declares in substantially the same manner the mutual dependence of fire, air, sun, space, moon, lightning, thunder, ether, law (dharma), the true (Satyam), mankind and all living beings and their fundamental unity with one another and with the Supreme Self.

“(14) This Self is the honey of all beings and all beings are the honey of this Self. Likewise, this bright immortal person is the Self, and that bright, immortal person, the Self (both are madhu). He indeed is the same as that Self, that Immortal, that Brahman, that All.

“(15) And verily this Self is the lord of all beings, the king of all beings. And as all spokes are contained in the axle and in the felly of a wheel, all beings and all those selfs (of the earth, water, etc.) are contained in that Self.”

Chapter III.

The third chapter which consists of nine Brahmanas is a long report of the proceedings of an assembly of learned men and women which met on the occasion of a sacrifice offered by the royal sage Janaka, king of Videha. In the course of discussions, BrahmaRishi Yajnavalkya answers various questions put to him by several interlocutors. His answers are embodied in the nine Brahmanas of this chapter of which the most prominent are quoted below. The gist of them is that the whole universe is rooted and grounded in one Supreme Reality.

First Brahmana.

“(1) Janaka Vaideha (King of the Videhas) sacrificed with a sacrifice at which many presents were offered to the priests of (the Asvamedha). Brahmanas of the Kurus and the Panchalas had come thither, and Janaka Vaideha wished to know, which of those Brahmanas was the best read. So he enclosed a thousand cows and ten padas (of gold) were fastened to each pair of horns.

“(2) And Janaka spoke to them: “Ye, Venerable Brahmanas, he who among you is the wisest, let him drive

away these cows." Then those Brahmanas durst not, but Yajnavalkya said to his pupil: "Drive them away, my dear." He replied: "O glory of the Saman", and drove them away. The Brahmanas became angry and said: "How could he call himself the wisest among us?" Now there was Aswala, the Hotri priest of Janaka Vaideha. He asked him: "Are you indeed the wisest among us, O Yajnavalkya?" He replied: "I bow before the wisest (the best knower of Brahman), but I wish indeed to have these cows."

Fourth Brahmana.

"(1) Then Ushasta Kakrayana asked "Yajnavalkya," he said: "tell me the Brahman which is visible, not invisible, the Self (atman) which is within all." Yajnavalkya replied: "This, thy Self, who is within all." "Which Self, O Yajnavalkya, is within all?" Yajnavalkya replied: "He who breathes in the up-breathing, he is thy Self and within all. He who breathes in the down-breathing, he is thy Self, and within all. He who breathes in the on-breathing, he is thy Self and within all. He who breathes in the out-breathing he is thy Self and within all. This is thy Self, who is within all."

"(2) Ushasta Kakrayana said: "As one might say this is a cow, this is a horse, thus has this been explained by thee. Tell me the Brahman which is visible, not invisible, the Self, who is within all. Yajnavalkya replied: "This thy Self who is within all: "which Self, O Yajnavalkya, is within all?" Yajnavalkya replied: "Thou couldst not see the (true) seer of sight, thou couldst not hear the (true) hearer of hearing, nor perceive the perceiver of perception, nor know the knower of knowledge. This is thy Self, who is within all. Everything else is of evil". After that Ushasta Kakrayana held his peace."

Fifth Brahmana.

"(1) Then Kahola Kaushtakeya asked: "Yajnavalkya," he said: "tell me the Brahman which is visible,

not invisible, the self (atman) who is within all." Yajnavalkya replied : " This is thy Self who is within all." Which Self, O Yajnavalkya, is within all ?" Yajnavalkya replied : " He who overcomes hunger and thirst, sorrow, passion, old age, and death. When Brahmanas know that Self and have risen above the desire for sons, wealth and (new) worlds, they wander about as mendicants. For, a desire for sons is desire for wealth, a desire for wealth is desire for worlds. Both these are indeed desires. Therefore let a Brahmana, after he has done with learning, wish to stand by real strength ; after he has done with that strength and learning, he becomes a Muni (a Yogin) and after he has done with what is not the knowledge of a Muni, and with what is the knowledge of a Muni, he is a Brahmana. By whatever means he has become a Brahmana, he is such indeed ; everything else is of evil. After that Kahola Kaushtakeya held his peace."

Sixth Brahmana.

" (1) Then *Gargi Vachaknavi* asked : " Yajnavalkya," she said : " Everything here is woven, like warp and woof, in water. What then is that in which water is woven, like warp and woof ?" " In air, O Gargi," he replied. " In what then is air woven like warp and woof ?" " In the worlds of the sky, O Gargi " he replied. " In what then are the worlds of the sky woven, like warp and woof ?" " In the worlds of Gandharvas, O Gargi " he replied. " In what then are the worlds of the Gandharvas woven, like warp and woof ?" " In the worlds of Aditya (sun), O Gargi ", he replied. " In what then are the worlds of Aditya (sun) woven, like warp and woof ?" " In the worlds of Chandra (moon), O Gargi," he replied. " In what then are the worlds of Chandra (moon) woven like warp and woof ?" " In the worlds of the Nakshatras (stars), O Gargi." He replied. " In what then are the worlds of Nakshatras (stars) woven, like warp and woof ? " " In the worlds of the Devas (gods), O Gargi," he replied. " In what then are the worlds of the Devas (gods) woven like

warp and woof?" "In the worlds of Indra, O Gargi," he replied. "In what then are the worlds of Indra woven like warp and woof?" "In the worlds of Prajapati, O Gargi," he replied. "In what then are the worlds of Prajapati woven like warp and woof?" "In the worlds of Brahman, O Gargi," he replied. "In what then are the worlds of Brahman woven like warp and woof?"

Yajnavalkya said: "O Gargi, do not ask too much, lest thy head should fall off. Thou askest too much about a deity about which we are not to ask too much. Do not ask too much, O Gargi." After that Gargi Vachaknavi held her peace."

The Seventh Brahmana.

In this Brahmana, which is also called "the *Antaryami-Brahmana*, Yajnavalkya answers Uddalaka Aruni's questions as to who is the *Sutratma* (the self which binds together all things as if by a thread) and the *Antaryami* (the Inner Ruler of all).

"(2) Yajnavalkya said: Vayu (air) is that thread, O Gautama. By air, as by a thread, O Gautama, this world and the other world, and all creatures are strung together. Therefore, O Gautama, people say of a dead person that his limbs have become unstrung; far, by air, as by a thread, O Gautama, they are strung together." The other said: "So it is, O Yajnavalkya, tell now (who is) the puller within."

"(3) Yajnavalkya said: "He who dwells in the earth and within the earth, whom the earth does not know, whose body the earth is, and who pulls (rules) the earth within, he is thy Self, the puller (ruler) within, the immortal."

Expounding the immanence of God in like terms not only in the earth but also in the water (verse 4), in the fire (verse 5), in the sky (verse 6), in the air (verse 7), in the heaven (verse 8) in the sun (verse 9), in the space (verse 10), in the moon and stars (verse 11), in the ether (verse 12), in the darkness (verse 13), in the light (verse 14) he continued as follows

“(15) Yajnavalkya said: “He who dwells in all beings and within all beings, whom all beings do not know, whose body all beings are and who pulls (rules), all beings within, he is thy Self, the puller (ruler) within, the immortal.”

The Rishi further goes on postulating likewise the immanent, binding and pulling power of God in the breath (prana) in verse 16, in the tongue in verse 17, in the eye in verse 18, in the ear in verse 19, in the mind in verse 20, in the skin in verse 21, in knowledge in verse 22, in the seed in verse 23, and concludes as follows:—

“(23) He who dwells in the seed and within the seed, whom the seed does not know, whose body the seed is and who pulls (rules) the seed within, he is thy Self, the puller (ruler) within, the immortal; *unseen, but seeing: unheard but hearing; unperceived but perceiving; unknown but knowing.*

There is no other seer but he, there is no other hearer but he, there is no other perceiver but he, there is no other knower but he. This is thy Self, the ruler within, the immortal. Everything else is of evil. After that Uddalaka Aruni held his peace.”

Eighth Brahmana.

“(1) Then Vachaknavi said: “Venerable Brahmanas, I shall ask him (Yajnavalkya) two questions. If he will answer them, none of you, I think, will defeat him in any argument concerning Brahman.” Yajnavalkya said: “Ask, O Gargi.”

“(2) She said: “O Yajnavalkya, as the son of a warrior from the Kasis or Videhas might string his loosened bow, take two pointed foe-piercing arrows in his hand and rise to do battle, I have risen to fight thee with two questions. Answer me these questions.” Yajnavalkya said: “Ask, O Gargi.”

“(3) She said: “O Yajnavalkya, that of which they say that it is above the heavens, beneath the earth, embracing

heaven and earth, past, present and future, tell me in what is it woven, like warp and woof? ”

“ (4) Yajnavalkya said : “ That of which they say that it is above the heavens, beneath the earth, embracing heaven and earth, past, present and future, that is woven like warp and woof, in the ether (akasa). ”

“ (5) She said : “ I bow to thee, O Yajnavalkya, who has solved me that question. Get thee ready for the second.” Yajnavalkya said : “ Ask, O Gargi.”

(Verse 6 and portion of 7 are inadvertent repetitions of verses 3 and 4 respectively).

“ (7) She said : “ In what then is ether woven like warp and woof? ”

“ (8) He said : “ O Gargi, the Brahmanas call this *Akshara* (the Imperishable). It is neither coarse nor fine, neither short nor long, neither red (like fire) nor fluid (like water) ; it is without shadow, without darkness, without air, without ether, without attachment, without taste, without smell, without eyes, without ears, without speech, without mind, without light (vigour), without breath, without a mouth (or door), without measure, having no within and no without, it devours nothing and no one devours it.”

“ (9) By the command of that *Akshara* (the imperishable), O Gargi, sun and moon stand apart. By the command of that *Akshara*, O Gargi, heaven and earth stand apart. By the command of that *Akshara*, O Gargi, what are called moments (nimesha), hours (muhurta), days and nights, half-months, months, seasons, years, all stand apart. By the command of that *Akshara*, O Gargi, some rivers flow to the East from the white mountains, others to the West, or to any other quarter. By the command of that *Akshara*, O Gargi, men praise those who give, the gods follow the sacrificer, the fathers the Darvi-offering.

“ (10) Whosoever, O Gargi, without knowing that *Akshara* (the imperishable) offers oblations in this world,

sacrifices, and performs penance for a thousand years, his work will have an end. Whosoever, O Gargi, without knowing this *Akshara* departs this world, he is miserable (like a slave). But he, O Gargi, who departs this world, knowing this *Akshara* he is a Brahmana.

“(11) That Brahman, O Gargi, is unseen, but seeing; unheard, but hearing; unperceived, but perceiving, unknown but knowing. There is nothing that sees but it, nothing that hears but it, nothing that perceives but it, nothing that knows but it. In that *Akshara* then, O Gargi, the ether is woven, like warp and woof.”

(12) Then said Gargi: “Venerable Brahmanas, you may consider it a great thing, if you get off by bowing before him. No one, I believe, will defeat him in any argument concerning Brahman.” After that Vachaknavi held her peace.

Chapter IV.

This chapter consists of six Brahmanas. In the third and fourth Brahmanas, Yajnavalkya expounds to Rajarishi Janaka his views on the nature of the self, its three states—waking, dreaming and dreamless sleep,—death and re-incarnation and liberation of the individual self.

Third Brahmana.

“(1) Yajnavalkya came to Janaka Vaideha, and he did not mean to speak with him. But when formerly Janaka Vaideha and Yajnavalkya had a disputation on the Agni-hotra, Yajnavalkya had granted him a boon, and he chose (for a boon) that he might be free to ask him any question he liked. Yajnavalkya granted it and thus the king was the first to ask him a question.

“(2) Yajnavalkya,” he said, “what is the light of man?” Yajnavalkya replied: “The sun, O king, for having the sun alone for his light, man sits, moves about, does his

work and returns." Janaka Vaideha said : " So indeed it is, O Yajnavalkya."

" (3) Janaka Vaideha said : " When the sun has set, O Yajnavalkya, what is then the light of man ?" Yajnavalkya replied : " The moon indeed is his light ; for having the moon alone as his light, man sits, moves about, does his work and returns." Janaka Vaideha said : " So indeed it is, O Yajnavalkya."

" (4) Janaka Vaideha said : " When the sun has set, O Yajnavalkya, and the moon has set, what is the light of man?" Yajnavalkya replied : " Fire indeed is his light ; for having fire alone as his light, man sits, moves about, does his work and returns."

" (5) Janaka Vaideha said : " When the sun has set, O Yajnavalkya, and the moon has set, and the fire is gone out, what is then the light of man?" Yajnavalkya replied : " Sound indeed is his light, for having sound alone for his light, man sits, moves about, does his work and returns. Therefore, O king, when one cannot see even one's own hand, yet when a sound is raised, one goes towards it." Janaka Vaideha said : " So indeed it is, O Yajnavalkya."

" (6) Janaka Vaideha said : " When the sun has set, O Yajnavalkya, and the moon has set, and the fire is gone out and the sound hushed, what is then the light of man?" Yajnavalkya said : " The Self is indeed his light, for having the Self alone as his light, man sits, moves about, does his work and returns."

" (7) Janaka Vaideha said : " Who is that Self?" Yajnavalkya replied : " He who is within the heart, surrounded by the Pranas (senses), the person of light, consisting of knowledge. He remaining the same, wanders along the two worlds, as if thinking, as if moving. During sleep (in dream) he transcends this world and all the forms of death (all that falls under the sway of death, all that is perishable).

“(8) On being born, that person, assuming his body, becomes united with all evils ; when he departs and dies, he leaves all evils behind.

“(9) And there are two states for that person, the one here in this world, the other in the other world, and as a third, an intermediate state, the state of sleep. When in that intermediate state, he sees both those states together, the one here in this world, and the other in the other world. Now whatever his admission to the other world may be, having gained that admission, he sees both the evils and the blessings. And when he falls asleep, then after having taken away with him the material from the whole world, destroying and building it up again, he sleeps (dreams) by his own light. In that state the person is self-illuminated.

“(10) There are no real chariots in that state, no horses, no roads, but he himself sends forth (creates) chariots, horses and roads. There are no blessings there, no happiness, no joys, but he himself sends forth (creates) blessings, happiness, and joys. There are no tanks there, no lakes, no rivers, but he himself sends forth (creates) tanks, lakes, and rivers. (He indeed is the matter).

“(11) On this there are these verses : After having subdued by sleep all that belongs to the body, he not asleep himself, looks down upon the sleeping (senses). Having assumed light, he goes again to his place, the golden person, the lonely bird.

“(12) Guarding with the breath (prana, life) the lower nest, the immortal moves away from the nest, that immortal one goes wherever he likes, the golden person, the lonely bird.

“(13) Going up and down in his dream, the god makes manifold shapes for himself, either rejoicing together with women, or laughing (with his friends, or seeing terrible sights).

“(14) People may see his playground, but himself no one ever sees. Therefore they say, “ Let no one wake a man suddenly, for it is not easy to remedy, if he does not get back

(rightly to his body)." Here some people (object and) say : " No, this sleep is the same as the place of waking, for what he sees while awake, that only he sees when asleep." No, here (in sleep) the person is self-illuminated (as we explained before). Janaka Vaideha said : " I give you, sir, a thousand. Speak on for the sake of (my) emancipation."

"(15) Yajnavalkya said : " That person having enjoyed himself in that state of bliss (samprasada, deep sleep), having moved about and seen both good and evil, hastens back again as he came, to the place from which he started (the place of sleep) to dream. And whatever he may have seen there, he is not followed (affected) by it, for that person is not attached to anything." Janaka Vaideha said : So it is indeed, Yajnavalkya, I give you, sir, a thousand, speak on for the sake of emancipation."

"(16) Yajnavalkya said : " That (person) having enjoyed himself in that sleep (dream), having moved about and seen both good and evil, hastens back again as he came, to the place from which he started, to be awake. And whatever he may have seen there, he is not followed (affected) by it, for that person is not attached to anything". Janaka Vaideha said : " So it is indeed, Yajnavalkya. I give you, sir, a thousand. Speak on for the sake of emancipation."

"(17) Yajnavalkya said : " That person having enjoyed himself in that state of waking, having moved about and seen both good and evil, hastens back again as he came, to the place from which he started to the state of sleeping (dream).

"(18) In fact, as a large fish moves along the two banks of a river, the right and the left, so does that person move along these two states, the state of sleeping and the state of waking.

"(19) And as a falcon, or any other (swift) bird, after he has roamed about here in the air, becomes tired, and folding his wings is carried to his nest, so does that person

hasten to that state where when asleep, he desires no more desires and dreams no more dreams.

“(20) There are in his body the veins called Hita, which are as small as a hair divided a thousand fold, full of white, blue, yellow, green and red. Now when, as it were, they kill him, when, as it were, they overcome him, when, as it were, an elephant chases him, when, as it were, he falls into a well, he fancies, through ignorance, that danger which he (commonly) sees in waking. But when he fancies that he is, as it were, a god, or that he is, as it were, a king, or “I am this altogether”, that is his highest world.

“(21) This indeed is his (true) form, free from desires, free from evil, free from fear. Now as a man when embraced by a beloved wife, knows nothing that is without, nothing that is within, thus, this person when embraced by the intelligent (pragna) self, knows nothing that is without, nothing that is within. This indeed is his (true) form, in which his wishes are fulfilled, in which the self (only) is his wish, in which no wish is left,—free from any sorrow.

“(22) Then a father is not a father, a mother is not a mother, the worlds not worlds, the gods not gods, the Vedas not Vedas. Then a thief is not a thief, a murderer not a murderer, a Chandala not a Chandala, a Paulkasa not a Paulkasa, a Sramana not a Sramana, a Tapasa not a Tapasa. He is not followed by good, not followed by evil, for he has then overcome all the sorrows of the heart.

“(23) And when (it is said that) there (in the sushupti) he does not see, yet he is seeing, though he does not see. For sight is inseparable from the seer, because it cannot perish. But there is then no second, nothing else different from him that he could see.

“(24) And when (it is said that) there (in the sushupti) he does not smell, yet he is smelling, though he does not smell. For smelling is inseparable from the smeller, because

it cannot perish. But there is then no second, nothing else different from him that he could smell.

“(25) And when (it is said that) there (in the sushupti) he does not taste, yet he is tasting, though he does not taste. For tasting is inseparable from the taster, because it cannot perish. But there is then no second, nothing else different from him that he could taste.

“(26) And when (it is said that) there (in the sushupti) he does not speak, yet he is speaking, though he does not speak. For speaking is inseparable from the speaker, because it cannot perish. But there is then no second, nothing else different from him that he could speak.

“(27) And when (it is said that) there (in the sushupti) he does not hear, yet he is hearing, though he does not hear. For hearing is inseparable from the hearer, because it cannot perish. But there is then no second, nothing else different from him that he could hear.

“(28) And when (it is said that) there (in the sushupti) he does not think, yet he is thinking, though he does not think. For thinking is inseparable from the thinker, because it cannot perish. But there is then no second, nothing else different from him that he could think.

“(29) And when (it is said that) there (in the sushupti) he does not touch, yet he is touching, though he does not touch. For touching is inseparable from the toucher, because it cannot perish. But there is then no second, nothing else different from him that he could touch.

“(30) And when (it is said that) there (in the sushupti) he does not know yet he is knowing, though he does not know. For knowing is inseparable from the knower, because it cannot perish. But there is then no second, nothing else different from him that he could know.

“(31) When (in waking and dreaming) there is, as it were, another, then can one see the other, then can one smell the other, then can one speak to the other, then can one

hear the other, then can one think the other, then can one touch the other, then can one know the other.

“ (32) An Ocean is that one seer without any duality ; this is the Brahma-world, O king ”. Thus did Yajnavalkya teach him. This is the highest goal. This is the highest success, this is the highest world. This is the highest bliss. All other creatures live on a small portion of that bliss.”

“ (33) If a man is healthy, wealthy and lord of others, surrounded by all human enjoyments, that is the highest blessing of men. Now a hundred of these human blessings make one blessing of the fathers who have conquered the world (of the fathers). A hundred blessings of the fathers who have conquered this world make one blessing in the Gandharva world. A hundred blessings in the Gandharva world make one blessing of the Devas by merit (worth, sacrifice) who obtain their god-head by merit. A hundred blessings of the Devas by merit make one blessing of the Devas by birth, also (of) a Srotriya who is without sin and not overcome by desire. A hundred blessings of the Devas by birth make one blessing in the world of Prajapati, also of a Srotriya who is without sin and not overcome by desire. A hundred blessings in the world of Prajapati make one blessing in the world of Brahman, also (of) a Srotriya who is without sin and not overcome by desire. And this is the highest blessing. “ This is the Brahma world, O king ” thus spake Yajnavalkya. Janaka Vaidehi said : “ I give you, sir, a thousand. Speak on for the sake of (my) emancipation.” Then Yajnavalkya was afraid lest the king having become full of understanding, should drive him from all his positions.

“ (34) And Yajnavalkya said : “ That (person) having enjoyed himself in that state of sleeping (dream), having moved about and seen both good and bad, hastens back again, as he came, to the place from which he started, to the state of waking.

“ (35) Now as a heavy-laden carriage moves along

groaning, thus does this corporeal Self mounted by the intelligent Self, move along groaning, when a man is thus going to expire.

“(36) And when (the body) grows weak through old age, or becomes weak through illness, at that time that person, after separating himself from his members, as an Amra, (mango) or Udumbara (fig) or Pippala-fruit is separated from the stalk, hastens back again as he came to the place from which he started, to (new) life.

“(37) And as policemen, magistrates, equerries and governors wait for a king who is coming back with food and drink, saying, “He comes back, he approaches”, thus do all the elements wait on him who knows this saying, “That Brahman comes, that Brahman approaches.”

“(38) And as policemen, magistrates, equerries and governors gather round a king who is departing, thus do all the senses (pranas) gather round the self at the time of death. when a man is thus going to expire.”

Fourth Brahmana.

“(1) Yajnavalkya continued: “Now when that self having sunk into weakness, sinks, as it were, into unconsciousness, then gather those senses (pranas) around him, and he, taking with him those elements of light, descends into the heart. When that person in the eye turns away, then he ceases to know any forms.

“(2) He has become one,” they say, “he does not see.” “He has become one,” they say, “he does not smell.” “He has become one,” they say, “he does not taste.” “He has become one,” they say, “he does not speak.” “He has become one,” they say, “he does not hear.” “He has become one,” they say, “he does not think.” “He has become one,” they say, “he does not touch.” “He has become one,” they say, “he does not know.” The point of his heart becomes lighted up and by that light, the self departs, either

through the eye or through the skull or through other places of the body. And when he thus departs, life (the chief prana) departs after him, and when life thus departs, all the other vital spirits (pranas) depart after it. He is conscious, and being conscious he follows and departs. Then both his knowledge and his work take hold of him and his acquaintance with former things.

“(3) And as a caterpillar, after having reached the end of a blade of grass and after having made another approach (to another blade), draws itself together towards it, thus does this self, after having thrown off his body and dispelled all ignorance, and after making another approach (to another body) draw himself together towards it.

“(4) And as a goldsmith, taking a piece of gold, turns it into another, newer and more beautiful shape, so does this self, after having thrown off this body and dispelled all ignorance, make unto himself another newer and more beautiful shape, whether it be like the Fathers, or like the Gandharvas, or like the Devas, or like Prajapati, or like Brahman or like other beings.

“(5) That self is indeed Brahman, consisting of knowledge, mind, life, sight, hearing, earth, water, wind ether, light and no light, desire and no desire, anger and no anger, right or wrong and all things. Now as a man is like this or that, according as he acts and according as he behaves, so will he be :—a man of good acts will become good, a man of bad acts, bad. He becomes pure by pure deeds, bad by bad deeds. And here they say that a person consists of desires. And as is his desire, so is his will, and as is his will, so is his deed : and whatever deed he does, that he will reap”.

From this verse, it will be seen that in the Brihadaranyaka the doctrine of Karma has been realised with firmer grip. It is said that every action good or bad, leaves its indelible mark on character, in fact, it is the action which makes the man.

“(6) And here there is this verse: “To whatever object a man’s own mind is attached, to that he goes strenuously together with his deed, and having obtained the end (the last results) of whatever deed he does here on earth, he returns again from that world (which is the temporary reward of his deed) to this world of action”. So much for the man who desires. But as to the man who does not desire who not desiring, freed from desires, is satisfied in his desires or desires the Self only, his vital spirits do not depart elsewhere,—Being Brahman, he goes to Brahman.

“(7) On this there is this verse: “When all desires which once entered his heart are undone, then does the mortal become immortal, then he obtains Brahman”. And as the slough of a snake lies on an ant-hill dead and cast away thus lies this body; but that disembodied immortal spirit (prana, life) is Brahman only, is only light”. Janaka Vaideha said: “Sir, I give you a thousand”.

“(8) On this there are these verses: “The small old path stretching far away has been found by me. On it sages who know Brahman move on to the Swarga-loka (heaven) and thence higher on, as entirely free.

“(9) On that path they say that there is white or blue or yellow or green or red, that path was found by Brahman; on it goes whoever knows Brahman and who has done good and obtained splendour.

“(10) All who worship what is not knowledge (avidya) enter into blind darkness; those who delight in knowledge enter, as it were, into greater darkness.

“(11) There are indeed those unblest worlds, covered by blind darkness. Men who are ignorant and not enlightened go after death to those worlds.

“(12) If a man understands the Self saying “I am He,” what could he wish or desire that he should pine after the body?

“(13) Whoever has found and understood the Self

that has entered into this patched-together-hiding-place, he indeed is the creator, for he is the maker of everything, his is the world, and he is the world itself.

“(14) While we are here, we may know this ; if not I am ignorant and there is great destruction. Those who know it become immortal, but others suffer pain indeed.

“(15) If a man clearly beholds this Self as God and as the lord of all that is and will be, then he is no more afraid.

“(16) He, behind whom the year revolves with the days, him the gods worship as the light of lights, as immortal time.

“(17) He, in whom the five beings and the ether rest, him alone I believe to be the Self,—I, who know, believe him to be Brahman. I, who am immortal, believe him to be immortal.

“(18) They who know the life of life, the eye of the eye, the ear of the ear, the mind of the mind, they have comprehended the ancient primeval Brahman.

“(19) By the mind alone it is to be perceived, there is in it no diversity. He who perceives therein any diversity goes from death to death.

“(20) This eternal being that can never be proved, is to be perceived in one way only ; it is spotless, beyond the ether, the unborn self, great and eternal.

“(21) Let a wise Brahmana, after he has discovered him, practise wisdom. Let him not seek after many words, for that is mere weariness of the tongue.

“(22) And he is that great unborn Self who consists of knowledge, is surrounded by the pranas, the ether within the heart. In it there reposes the ruler of all, the lord of all, the king of all. He does not become greater by good works, nor smaller by evil works. He is the lord of all, the king of all things, the protector of all things. He is a bank and a boundary so that these worlds may not be confounded. Brahmanas seek to know him by the study of the Veda, by

sacrifice, by gifts, by penance, by fasting and he who know him becomes a Muni. Wishing for that world (for Brahman only, mendicants leave their homes.

Knowing this, the people of old did not wish for off-spring. What shall we do with off-spring, they said, we who have this Self and this world (of Brahman)? And they having risen above the desire for sons, wealth, and new worlds wander about as mendicants. For, desire for sons is desire for wealth and desire for wealth is desire for worlds. Both these are indeed desires only. He, the Self, is to be described by "No, no." He is incomprehensible, for he cannot be comprehended; he is imperishable, for he cannot perish; he is unattached, for he does not attach himself; unfettered, he does not suffer, he does not fail. Him (who knows) these two do not overcome, whether he says that for some reason he has done evil, or for some reason he has done good—he overcomes both and neither what he has done, or what he has omitted to do, burns (affects) him.

"(23) This has been told by a verse (Rik) "This eternal greatness of the Brahmana does not grow larger by work nor does it grow smaller. Let man try to find (know) its trace, for having found (known) it, he is not sullied by any evil deed."

"He, therefore, that knows it, after having become quiet, subdued, satisfied, patient and collected, sees self in Self, sees all as Self. Evil does not overcome him, he overcomes all evil. Evil does not burn him, he burns all evil. Free from evil, free from spots, free from doubt, he becomes a (true) Brahmana. This is the Brahma world, O king,—thus spoke Yajnavalkya, Janaka Vaideha said: "Sir, I give you the Vaidehas and also myself, to be together your slaves."

"(24) This indeed is the great, the unborn Self, the strong, the giver of wealth. He who knows thus obtains wealth.

"(25) This great unborn Self, undecaying, undying,

immortal, fearless, is indeed Brahman. Fearless is Brahman and he who knows this becomes verily the fearless Brahman"—

The fifth Brahmana is a repetition of the fourth Brahmana of chapter II.

In Chapter V there seems to be nothing of importance although it contains fifteen Brahmanas.

In Chapter VI which consists of five Brahmanas, the only noteworthy Brahmanas are the 1st and the 2nd. The former contains the parable of the dispute between the senses and life, contending for supremacy and the latter contains the classical story of Svetaketu repairing to the court of the king of Panchala and being non-plussed by that learned Kshatria and finally receiving instruction from him along with his father on the five fires and the two paths. These have been already dealt with in *Chandogya*.

CHAPTER III. THE AITAREYA UPANISHAD.

The *Aitareya Upanishad* is supposed to be the work of Rishi Mahidas Aitareya whose mother was Itara. It consists of three chapters of which the third alone is of gnostic value as declaring the dependence of the whole material and moral world on *Consciousness* or *Reason* which, with its innumerable internal manifestations and modifications is identified with the Self or the Supreme Being. The Rishi further declares that the Self is the knowing principle in man, that it is a subject and not a mere substance.

Chapter III.

"1. Who is the Self whom we worship? Which among these things is that Self? It is verily that by which one sees visible objects, by which one hears sound, by which one smells smell, by which one knows a good and bad taste.

"2. This, what is called the heart, this what is called the sensorium, consciousness, activity, ideation, reason, intellect, knowledge, power of grasping, attention, meditation,

alertness, memory, determination, resolution, vitality, desire, will—all these are names of reason.

“3. This Brahma, this Indra, this Prajapati, all the gods, these five elements, the earth, air, the sky, water, light, these and these small animals like mixed ones and various kinds of seed and animals born from eggs, from the uterus and from dirt, and various kinds of plants, and horse, cows, men, elephants and all living things, moving, flying and immovable, all these are led by Reason and rest in Reason. The world is led by Reason and Reason is its support. Reason is Brahman.”

The definition of the self given by the Rishi is a very comprehensive one. All that fall under knowing, feeling and willing in modern language are here said to be attributes of the self. All the activities of the self are dependent on knowledge—feeling and willing being impossible without it. The Rishi, therefore, declares that Reason itself is the Absolute and all things in the world rest in Reason.

The first part of the definition of Self given in the first verse speaks of the self as,—not the instrument of knowing as the word *by* may lead us to suppose,—but as that, of which the existence in us makes us knowing beings. The second part of the definition given in the second verse enumerates a few internal manifestations of the self.

CHAPTER IV. THE ISOPANISHAD.

This Upanishad is so called from its first word *Isa* in the first verse. It is also called *Vajasaneya sanhitopanishad* as it forms part of a *Yajurveda sanhita* of that name. *Isa*, the Lord, is a far more personal and endearing name for the Highest Being, the object of the profoundest knowledge than the ordinary Upanishadic names of Brahman, Atma, Self. The doctrine that the moment a man is enlightened he becomes free, as taught in other Upanishads, led to the rejection of all discipline and a condemnation of all sacrifices.

This Upanishad attempts to establish a *via media* between, a bridge, as it were, to connect the extreme followers of the *Karma Kanda* and the *Jnana Kanda*. It condemns the exclusive devotion to *Karma* (work) or *Jnana* (knowledge) and insists on the harmonious cultivation of both knowledge and action, or in other words, on the recognition of the necessity of works as a preparation for the reception of the highest knowledge.

According to Max-Müller :

"The Upanishad wishes to teach the uselessness by themselves of all good works whether we call them sacrificial, legal or moral, and yet at the same time, to recognise, if not the necessity, at least the harmlessness of good works, provided they are performed without any selfish motives, without any desire of reward, but as simply as a preparation for higher knowledge, as a means, in fact, of subduing all passions and producing that serenity of mind without which man is incapable of receiving the highest knowledge. From that point of view, the Upanishad may well say, let a man wish to live here his appointed time, let him even perform all works. If only he knows that all must be surrendered to the Lord, then the work done by him will not cling to him. It will not work on and produce effect after effect, nor will it involve him in a succession of new births in which to enjoy the reward of his works, but it will leave him free to enjoy the blessings of the highest knowledge. It will have served as a preparation for that higher knowledge which the Upanishad imparts and which secures freedom from further births."

"1. All this, whatever changeable thing there is in the world, is to be hidden in God. Thou shouldst enjoy all things after giving up the desire for them (or thou shouldst satisfy thyself by things given by God). Do not covet any man's possessions.

"2. One should wish to live a hundred years here surely by performing duties. Work does not cling to thee, to man, when he acts in this manner. There is no other way than this.

"3. There are those sunless worlds enveloped in blinding darkness. Those persons who destroy their selves go to them when they die."

The above verses 2 and 3 seem to suggest that an aversion to work and life-weariness and a spirit of profound pessimism had set in among the Aryans to whom life had been so sweet and work so attractive. The conception that the work was a fetter or a bondage must have had already taken a deep root in the minds of the people. The desire not to live long and perhaps even to put an end to life must have become very common. It is, therefore, enjoined that one should desire to live a hundred years, the normal term of life, doing his work and enjoying the fruits of his labour, without coveting others' wealth or properties and that he has no right to put a violent end to his own life.

"4. The One is unmoving, yet faster than thought. The senses do not reach it ; it goes before them. Though standing still, it goes beyond others who run. Resting on it, the wind causes vital movements."

"5. It moves, and it moves not. It is far, and it is near. It is in all this, and it is out of all this.

"6. He who sees all things in the Self and the Self in all things, does not hate anyone, for that reason.

"7. When to the wiseman, the Self has become all things, what delusion or what sorrow can there be to him who sees unity."

Verses 6 and 7 are the very crown of the Upanishadic literature on love. Whoever sees all things in God and God in all things does not hate any one or keep himself separate from any one. His love of self sinks and ultimately disappears.

"8. He has gone all round, he is bright, incorporeal, scatheless, without nerves, holy and untouched by sin. He is the seer, the controller of mind above all, and self-existent. He dispensed all things as they should be, to the enduring years (conceived as providing duties).

"9. Those who worship not-knowledge, enter into blinding darkness ; those that are attached to knowledge enter into still greater darkness.

" 10. They say that one thing results from knowledge and another from not-knowledge. This we have heard from the wise men who taught us about that.

" 11. He who knows knowledge and not-knowledge at the same time, overcomes death through not-knowledge, and attains immortality through knowledge.

" 12. Those who worship the not-cause, enter into blinding darkness. Those who are attached to the cause, enter into still greater darkness.

" 13. They say that one thing results from the cause and another from the not-cause. This we have heard from those who have taught us about that.

" 14. He who knows the cause and destruction at the same time, overcomes death through destruction and obtains immortality through the cause."

Verses 9 to 14 which are held to be the central teaching of this Upanishad seem to contradict each other and are considered to be some of the most enigmatical utterances in the Upanishadic literature. The commentators vary considerably in their interpretations. Tattwabhusan who seems to agree with the interpretation of Max-Müller and disagree with that of Sankara which Raja Ram Mohan Roy follows has an interesting note on these verses from which the following is extracted :—

" There seems to have been from a very early age a class of thinkers or devotees who were for giving up duties, both sacrificial and social, as soon as they attained a knowledge of Brahman. They thought that *vidya* and *avidya*, knowledge and not-knowledge or work, could not be harmonised, that devotion to the cause, *i.e.*, to Brahman, excluded all devotion to the not-cause, *i.e.*, Nature—that a life of deep contemplation was not compatible with active life—a life in close contact with the material world. The author of the *Isopanishad* seems to think that both these aspects of life,—the contemplative and the practical are equally necessary for human perfection and could receive equal attention. By devoting ourselves to practical duties, we avoid what the author describes as death, *i.e.*, that merely instinctive or animal life which man lives before he is awakened to

a sense of duty ; while by the contemplation and worship of God, we rise to that higher spiritual life which the author aptly describes as *amritam*, immortality. Following only one of these disciplines to the exclusion of the other is apt to generate spiritual blindness, *andha tamah* and the author is scarcely wrong in thinking that the blindness produced by an exclusive spirituality is a deeper blindness than what caused by an exclusive ceremonialism. Sankara, however, explains *Vidya* to be only the knowledge of the gods and not that of Brahman ”.

CHAPTER V. THE KATHOPANISHAD.

This Upanishad which consists of six chapters records a dialogue between Yama, the god of death, and Nachiketa, a Brahmin youth, the son of Rishi Vajasravasa. The story is to be found also in the Brahmana of the Taittiriya Yajur Veda. Vajasravasa who is also known as Aruni Uddalak Gautama performed the sacrifice of Visvajit. In this sacrifice, one has to give away all one possesses. Nachiketa observed that his father was parting as presents to Brahmins with all old, barren and useless cows, got disgusted with his father's miserly act and knowing that in this particular sacrifice, he, as a part of his father's property, was also intended to be given away as a present, asked his father : “ To which of the priests are you going to present me ? ” He repeated this question thrice. Enraged at the son's impertinence, the father turned round in anger and replied : “ I will give you to Death, Yama ! ”

The story in the Brahmana of the Taittiriya Yajur Veda is continued as follows : Then came a voice to the youth Gautama as he stood up. “ He, thy father said, go away from the house of death, I give thee to death.” Go, therefore, to death when he is not at home and dwell in his house for three nights without eating. If he should ask thee “ Boy, how many nights have thou been here ? ” Say “ three.” When he asks thee, “ What didst thou eat the first night ? ” Say “ Thy offspring.” “ What didst thou eat the second night ? ” Say “ Thy cattle.” What didst thou eat the

third night?" Say "Thy good works." (*This portion is not to be found in the Kathopanishad*).

The youth then cheerfully went to the regions of Yama, entered Yama's house during his absence and stayed there three nights without eating. On return, Yama pitied the starving Brahmana and as a penance for this sin of inhospitality, offered him three boons. Accordingly, the first boon asked by Nachiketa, the dutiful, devout and loving son as he was, was that his father might be pacified and made free from anger towards him and greet him on his return. On this being granted, the second boon asked was that he might be taught all about the fire sacrifice which would lead to heaven where there is no old age, hunger, thirst or death. On this, Yama initiated Nachiketa into the mysteries of fire sacrifice and named it after him (Nachiketa) in appreciation of his quest for divine knowledge. As his third boon, Nachiketa asks for the clearance of his ever puzzling doubt that when a man is dead, whether he exists or not. Unwilling to impart the secret of the future of a man, Yama says that it is a difficult question to answer and prevails upon the youth to give up that boon and ask another instead, tempting him as an alternative with all the treasures of the earth and all the enjoyments to be found in the world of the devas. Nachiketa is, however, resolute and adamant, speaks strongly of the worthlessness of these enjoyments and asks for the clearance of his doubt and for instruction in self-knowledge. "These things last till to-morrow, O Death, for they wear out this vigour of all the senses. Even the whole of life is short, keep thou thy horses, keep dance and song for thyself. No man can be made happy by wealth. Shall we possess wealth when we see thee? Shall we live as long as thou livest? Only that boon (which I have chosen) is to be chosen by me." Mightily pleased with Nachiketa's noble determination, his strong dislike for worldly possessions and pleasures and his

passionate longing for spiritual knowledge, Yama discloses to him the secret asked for and several other truths that form the subject matter of chapters II to VI of this Upanishad.

Chapter II.

This deals with the distinction between the good and the pleasant and the nature of the soul.

"1. Yama said : The good is one thing and the pleasant another. These two, having different objects, bind man. It is well with him who accepts the good out of these two ; but he who accepts the pleasant misses the real object of life."

I reproduce below Tattwabhusan's interesting exposition of this verse :

"Yama, having tried Nachiketa's fitness for such instruction by offering him various temptations, at last accepted him as his disciple. The first lesson taught by him is the distinction between the good and the pleasant. People in their state of ignorance regard the whole world as a not-self. The world appears to them as an assemblage of finite objects. Many of these objects seem attractive as means of sensuous enjoyment. *Preyah* means seeking objects as mere means of pleasure. In the lower stages of life, people inevitably follow the path of *preyah*, but there is in man something higher than *preyah*. There is a motive to action other than mere likes and dislikes, other than the desire of enjoying pleasure and avoiding pain; what is true, what is great, what is proper, whether it be pleasant or painful, is to be followed,—this is that motive, this is the path of the good. As long as man is predominantly under the sway of the pleasant, as long as the sense of the good is not strong in him, as long as he is unable to give up the pleasant for the sake of the good, it is fruitless to attempt to teach him any higher truth or religion. The way of the pleasant is the way of ignorance, whereas that of the good is the way of knowledge. The way of the pleasant is the way of untruth, whereas that of the good is the way of truth. The way of the pleasant is the way of apparent happiness, whereas that of the good is the way of duty irrespective of pleasure and pain. The way of the pleasant yields only '*alpa*', the finite, whereas the way of the good brings '*Bhuman*', the Infinite, before us".

To the learned Pandit's above exposition, I may add

that the way of the pleasant is to endeavour to accommodate God's moral economy to one's carnal requisites, whereas the way of the good is to do whatever that is right, whether expedient or otherwise, to offer unquestioning submission to the Great Master's Commands, however hostile they may appear to one's temporal interests and to exalt and adapt oneself to the requirements of God's law. The way of the pleasant is to pursue pleasure as the purpose of life as an animal. The way of the good is to subdue pleasure to the purpose of life as a man. The way of the pleasant is to follow the lead of the instinct. The way of the good is to guide the instinct with reason. The way of the pleasant makes man the creature of the day. The way of the good transforms man into a pilgrim of eternity.

"6. The future life is not revealed to a man without understanding, thoughtless and deluded by the fascinations of wealth. One who thinks that this world alone exists and there is no future world, comes under my sway again and again."

"12. Having realised by the knowledge obtained through spiritual communion that Divine Being, who is difficult to be seen, who is hidden, who pervades all things, who is in the heart, who lives in inaccessible places, and who is ancient,—the wise man gives up both joy and sorrow.

"13. Having heard of it and thoroughly grasped it, having discriminated the pure One from other things, having taken hold of this subtle One, and having gained the blissful One, man rejoices. It seems to me that the house of God lies with its door opened to Nachiketa."

"18. The knowing self neither is born nor dies. It is not produced from anything, nor is anything produced from it. It is unborn, eternal, everlasting and ancient. It is not destroyed when the body is destroyed.

"19. If the slayer thinks that he slays the self, if the slain thinks that his self is slain, both of them are ignorant, for the self neither slays nor is slain."

In the above verses 18 and 19, we have a clear and emphatic declaration not only of the immortality but also of the eternity of the soul. The Bhagavadgita has adopted these verses as its own and the idea of the eternity of the soul which has permeated all subsequent Hindu thought may be said to have its origin here.

“ 20. The Self, which is smaller than the smallest and greater than the greatest, is placed in the heart of this living creature. One who is free from desire and sorrow sees the glory of the Self when his internal organs become pure.”

“ 22. The wise man, knowing the Self to be incorporeal though existing in changeable bodies, great and all-pervading, becomes free from grief.

“ 23. This Self is not attainable by teaching the Vedas, nor by understanding, nor by great learning. It is attainable by him alone whom it chooses (for self-manifestation). This Self reveals its body, i.e., its nature to him.”

“ 24. One who has not ceased from wicked conduct, who is not tranquil, who is not self-contained and whose mind is not at rest, does not obtain it even by reason.”

Here the teacher of this Upanishad places purity of character above the acquisition of knowledge. One, even though possessing the highest knowledge of God cannot attain Him, if he is wicked and impure in mind. This is remarkable for an Upanishad. Here Jnan has been undervalued and moral integrity has been rightly placed above it. We find a similar idea conveyed in the Mundaka Upanishad (III-i-8 and 9).

Chapter III.

This deals mainly with the importance of inward purification.

“ 1. In this world, in the highest place of Brahman, (i.e., in the heart) two (the universal and the individual soul) are enjoying the fruits of their own work. Those who know Brahman, describe them as light and shade, also those who feed the five fires (house-holders) and those who feed the fire thrice.”

The idea contained in this verse that the Universal and the individual are enjoying the fruits of their works is not consistent with the orthodox view nor with the common sense. God cannot be said to be affected by the actions of the human soul.

" 3. Know the self to be the charioteer and the body to be chariot; the understanding to be the driver and sensorium to be reins.

" 4. Wise men have described the senses to be horses, the objects taken into them to be roads, and the self endowed with the senses and the sensorium to be the subject (lit. the enjoyer).

" 5. The senses of him who is unwise, with a mind always uncontrolled, are unmanageable like the naughty horses of a driver.

" 6. The senses of him who is wise, with a mind always under control, are manageable like the good horses of a driver.

" 7. He who is unwise, of an uncontrolled mind and always unholy, does not attain that (i.e., the highest) place, but attains mundane existence.

" 8. He who is wise, of a controlled mind, and always holy, attains that place from which one is not born again.

" 9. The man whose driver is wisdom and whose reins consist of the sensorium, reaches the end of the path—the highest place of the All-pervading.

" 10. The objects are superior to the senses, the sensorium is superior to the objects, the understanding superior to the sensorium, and the great soul (the cosmic soul) superior to the understanding.

" 11. The undeveloped (seed of the world) is superior to the great soul, and the Supreme Person superior to the Undeveloped. There is nothing superior to the Person; he is the end, the highest goal.

" 12. This Self is hidden in all things, it is not manifested. But subtle seers see him by their keen and subtle intellects."

"15. That which is without speech, without touch without form, without decay, without taste, without smell eternal, without beginning and end, greater than the great and unchangeable—knowing that, the worshipper is delivered from the mouth of Death."

Chapter IV.

This treats mainly of the unity of the Self.

"1. The Self-existent has made the senses face outwards and so man looks outwards and does not see the inner Self. Some wise men, with eyes, averted from objects and wishing immortality, see the Self that is directly seen.

"2. Men of little sense pursue outward objects of desire and so they are caught in the snare of death spread out on all sides. On the other hand, wise men, knowing immortality to be permanent, do not desire anything out of fleeting objects.

"3. Of this Self, by which man knows form, taste, smell sounds and sensual touches, what remains to be known in this world? This is that.

"4. A wise man ceases to grieve when he knows the great, the all-pervading Self by which man knows objects both in the waking and dreaming condition."

"9. In him, from whom the sun rises, and in whom he sets, do the gods rest, no one goes beyond him. This is that.

"10. That which is here, is also there. That which is there is also here. He who thinks it to be many, goes from death to death.

"11. It is to be attained by the mind alone, there is no plurality in it. He who thinks it to be many, goes from death to death."

Chapter V.

This speaks of the omnipresence of Brahman and His immanence in Nature and in Man.

"1. The Self, unborn and of unbending intellect, has

city with eleven doors. When one thinks of it, one ceases to grieve; delivered from ignorance and worldly desires, one is delivered (from mundane existence). This is that.

"2. This Self is the sun in heaven, the air in the sky, the fire in the altar, and the soma juice in the jar. It is in man, in the gods, in the sacrifice and in the sky. It is born in water, in the earth, in sacrifices and on mountains. It is the true and the great.

"3. The Self sends up the uprising breath and brings down the downfalling breath. It is seated as the adorable in the middle, and all the senses worship it.

"4. When the Self ready to go out of the body is delivered from the body, what remains in it? This is that.

"5. No creature liveth either by the uprising or the downfalling breath. All live by another, in whom both these rest.

"6. I shall now tell you, O Gautama, of Brahman the inscrutable and the eternal, and what the self becomes after death.

"7. Some enter into the womb for assuming a body; others enter into immovable things (as trees and stones) according to their respective knowledge and actions.

"8. This Person who wakes while all things sleep making one desirable object after another, that alone is right, that is Brahman, that verily is called the immortal. In it rest all the worlds and none go beyond it. It is that.

"9. As the one fire entering the world, takes the form of each object it burns, so the one Inner Self of all creatures takes the form of each object and is also beyond all objects.

"10. As the one air entering the world, takes the form of each object, so the one Inner Self of all creatures takes the form of each object and is also beyond all objects.

"11. As the sun, the eye of the whole world, is not mixed up with the unholy external objects visible to the

eye; so the one Inner Self of all creatures, is beyond objects, is not mixed up with the sorrows of the world.

" 12. The one Ruler, the Inner Self, of all creatures, makes his one form manifold—those wise men who perceive him in themselves, obtain everlasting happiness and others.

" 13. The Eternal among non-eternal things, the consciousness of conscious things, who, though alone, dispenses to many their objects of desire,—those wise men who see in themselves obtain everlasting peace and not others.

" 14. How shall I know him whom wise men know "It is this" and obtain great and unspeakable happiness Does it shine by its own light or by the light of another

" 15. The sun does not shine there, nor the moon, stars or these lightnings. How shall this fire shine the All shine after him, the shining one. All this shines by light.

Chapter VI.

This deals chiefly with the distinction of self and not-self.

" (1) This eternal banyan tree has its roots on high and its branches going downwards. It alone is bright. In Brahman, it alone is called the immortal. These worlds are in it and none go beyond it. This is that.

" (2) All this, whatever moves, proceeds from life; moves in it. It is very terrible, like thunder ready to strike. Those who know it become immortal.

" (3) The fire burns from fear of it; from fear of it do the sun shine. From fear of it do Indra (the rain giver) Air and Death, the fifth, do their respective work.

" (4) If any one fails to know it before the destruction of the body, he is born again in the world in which creatures live.

" (5) As one sees oneself in a looking glass, so one sees the Self in oneself; as in a dream, so in the world of *pitris* (manes); as in water, so in the world of the Gandhar

(a species of demi-gods) ; as in light and shade, so in the word of Brahman.

“(6) The wiseman ceases to grieve when he knows the distinction of the Self from the senses, which have been produced separately as also their waking and sleeping conditions.

“(7) The sensorium is higher than the senses, and the great being (Sattvam, that is, the understanding) is higher than the sensorium ; the great soul is higher than the being and the unmanifested higher than the great.

“(8) Higher than the unmanifested is the Person, all-pervading and formless, by knowing whom the creature is liberated and attains immortality.

“(9) He has no form visible to the eye ; no one sees him with the eye. He is revealed through the heart, the understanding and through meditation. They who know him become immortal.

“(10) When the five senses, with the sensorium are at rest, and the understanding also does not work,— that is called the highest condition by the wise.

“(11) They call that unmoved state of the senses *yoga* (union). The worshipper then becomes watchful, for *yoga* is subject to rise and fall.

“(12) Brahman cannot be reached by either speech, the sensorium or the eye. How can it be realised by any one, but him who says “ It is ” ?

“(13) It is to be realised as “ it is ” and also in its true character. When it is realised as “ it is ”, its true character becomes revealed.

“(14) When all the desires that exist in his heart cease, the mortal becomes immortal, and obtains Brahman even here.

“(15) When in this world, all the knots of the heart are cut, the mortal becomes immortal,—thus far goes the instruction.

“(16) The heart has one hundred and one arteries them one has issued through the head. The self comes through it and attains immortality, while the rest, go different ways, help it to go out (to mundane existence).

“(17) The person of the size of the thumb, the In Self, is seated in the heart of man. One should patiently diseminate it from one's body, as one separates the pith from reed. One should know it as the bright, the immortal, and should know it as the bright, the immortal.”

God is poetically represented to be of the size of the thumb because, as the Supreme Self, He is manifested in the heart man, which, according to an ancient doctrine is of the size thumb.

“(18) Then Nachiketa having obtained this knowledge as told by Death and also all the rules of Yoga, obtained Brahman and became holy and immortal. Any one who may know the science of the Self in this manner, may do the same.”

CHAPTER VI. THE KAUSHITAKI UPANISHAD

This Upanishad which consists of four chapters gives a graphic description of the Brahmaloaka, the paths which lead to it, the sastric exposition of the doctrine of incarnation and the unity of all things in an undivided consciousness a system of subjective idealism. One remarkable aspect of the *Kaushitaki Upanishad* is that, it favours more than any other Upanishad the opinion held by competent authorities of the Upanishads that the movement of thought inaugurated by them originated mostly with the Kshatriyas though it was taken up and latterly developed by the Brahmanas. In two of the four chapters of Kaushitaki, in the first and the fourth it is a Kshatriya chief who is the speaker and teacher. It is Chitra in the former and Ajata-satru, King of Kasi, in the latter. In both cases, the learners are Brahmanas, Uddala Aruni in the first and Gargya Balaki in the second. In each case, the Brahmanas confess their ignorance and seek a

receive instruction from their Kshatria teachers with fuel in their hands. In the *Chandogya* and the *Brihadaranyaka* Upanishad, we have already noticed instances of this striking phenomenon.

Chapter I.

In this Chapter, Chitra, a Kshatria chief, in his teaching to Uddalaka Aruni and his son, two Brahmanas, gives a graphic description of the *Pitrayana* and *Devayana* paths, the *Brahmaloka*—the divine regions—to which the *Devayana* leads. This description is on the face of it figurative, the text itself explaining the allegorical nature at every step, the commentator (Sankarananda) also making it clear beyond any reasonable doubt. The two paths *Pitriyana* and *Devayana* and the lunar and solar regions to which they lead, should be construed as only two methods of religious culture and two spiritual conditions which result from them. These two methods and conditions are not indeed confined to our life here but also extend to hereafter; but they do not indicate two spatial passages and two regions in space. The *Pitriyana* is really the blind following of rites and customs promulgated by our ancestors, and the *Devayana* the method of *sadhana* discovered by the direct experience of *devas*, enlightened souls—an experience to be repeated in every *sadaka*. The uncritical blindness characterising the former path is compared by Chitra to smoke, mist, the dark fortnight etc., and even the goal it leads to is nothing better than the borrowed and reflected light of the moon. Such a method of *sadhana* cannot lead to any stable spiritual gain. The unstability attached to it, is typified by repeated transmigration to high or low forms of life. The *Devayana* is symbolised by fire, the solar rays, the bright fortnight etc., and it leads to the solar regions, the very source of light. The goal achieved is lasting from which there is no descent.

A description of the *Pitrayana* and *Devayana* paths and the *Brahmaloka* in the words of Chitra is given below to

enable the reader to draw his own inferences as to what exactly the Raja Rishi wanted to convey in his master allegory :

" 1. Chitra, the son of Gargya (or Gangya), wishing to offer a sacrifice, appointed Aruni (son of Aruna) as his priest. He sent his son Swetaketu, saying, " Get the sacrifice done. When Swetaketu had seated himself, Chitra questioned him thus : " O son of Gautama (another name of Aruni, he has been a descendant of Gautama), is there any secret place in this world where you can place me ? Or, is there any other way leading to a world where you can place me ?" He said, " I do not know this, let me ask my teacher." Having come to his father, he questioned him thus : " Chitra questioned me thus; how am I to answer him." Aruni said, " I too do not know this. We will go and study this part of the Vedas in Chitra's Council. As others give us knowledge, (so will you give it). Come, let both of us go." Aruni, with fuel in his hand (after the manner of a candidate for initiation) approached the son of Gargya with the words: " Let me be initiated by you." Chitra said to him, " You deserve to be honoured as Brahman, O Gautama, since you felt no pride ; come, I shall explain the matter clearly to you."

" 2. Chitra said: All those who depart from this world go to the moon. The moon rejoices in their lives in the former (or bright) fortnight, but in the latter (or dark) fortnight it does not please them. One who refuses to live in the moon, which is the way to heaven, the moon causes him to be born in a higher world. One who does not so refuse, the moon sends him down in the form of rain. He is born here according to his deeds and his knowledge, in these bodies either as an insect, or a fly, a bird, a tiger, a lion, a fish, a serpent or a man. When he comes, the moon (or so-called preceptor) asks him " who are you ?" He should answer him thus : " The Gods sent and placed me into an active state as seed from the skilful moon, the embodiment of the seasons."

with fifteen parts, born of oblations to the fire and the abode of the manes. They caused me to be poured by the man into my mother. Then, for being born, I took a body and was born as one whose age is counted by years of twelve or (sometimes) thirteen months, with my father, whose age was counted in the same manner, for the knowledge of Brahman and for knowledge opposed to it. Therefore, O gods, sustain my life for me with the object of granting me immortality. By that truth and by that austerity I am the season and the child of the season. (But with reference to my essential nature). Who am I? I am you (for all share the Divine essence)'' Then the moon sends him up.

'' 3. Reaching the *devayana* path, he comes to the region of fire, then to the region of air, then to that of the sun, then to that of Varuna, then to the world of Indra, then to that of Prajapati, and then to the Brahmaloka. In this Brahmaloka, there are the lakes named *Ara* (consisting of evil passions), the moments called *Yeshtiha* (destroying the good), the river named *Vijara* (giving freedom from old age), the tree called *Ilya* (like the earth), the city, named *Salajyam* (with high-banked reservoirs of water), the building named *Aparijitam* (impregnable) of which Indra and Prajapati are gate-keepers, the Council Chamber called the *Bibhu* (all-pervading), the throne named *Vichakshana* (full of wisdom), a coach named *Amitauja* (of infinite splendour), (Brahman's) consort named *Manasi* (the delightful, *i.e.*, Nature) and her reflection *Chakshushi* (probably the Individual soul) who both weave the creatures like flowers; the mothers (the *Srutis*), and the mental powers as heavenly nymphs, and the rivers named *ambaya* (leading to the knowledge of God). He who knows all this approaches it, *i.e.*, Brahmaloka. Then Brahman says (to his attendants) with reference to him, '' Run and receive him with honour due to me. He has crossed the *Vijara* river, he will not suffer old age (again).''

'' 4. Five hundred of the heavenly nymphs go towards

him, a hundred with powders in their hands, a hundred with dresses in their hands, a hundred with fruits in their hands, a hundred with anointments in their hands, and a hundred with garlands in their hands. They adorn him with Brahmic adornments. He, the knower of Brahman, adorned with Brahmic adornments, goes towards Brahman. He comes to the lake *Ara* and crosses it with his mind. But those who are devoid of the knowledge of Brahman sink into it when they come to it. He comes to the moments called *Yeshtiha* and they withdraw from him. He comes to the river *Vijara* and crosses it. There he gives up his merits and demerits. His dear kinsmen obtain his merits, and his enemies his demerits. As one driving fast in a chariot sees the wheels of the chariot, so he sees day and night, merit and demerit and all pairs of opposites (without being involved in them). He, the knower of Brahman, freed from merit and demerit, goes towards Brahman.

“ 5. He comes to the tree *Ilya*, and the odour of Brahman enters into him. He comes to the City named *salajyam* and the flavour of Brahman enters into him. He comes into the building named *Aparijitam* and the brightness of Brahman enters into him. He comes to the gate-keepers, Indra and Prajapati, and they withdraw from him. He comes to the Council chamber named *Bhibu*, and the fame of Brahman enters into him. He comes to the throne *Vichakshana* which the hymns *Brihat* and *Rathantara* are the eastern legs, *Svaita* and *Naudhasa* are western legs, *Vairupa* and *Vairaja* are northern and southern edges and *Sakka* and *Raivata* are eastern and western edges. That throne is Reason, for it is by Reason that one sees properly. He comes to the Coach *Amitauja*. That is Prana. Of that past and the future are the eastern legs, worldly prosperity and the earth the western legs, the hymns *Brihat* and *Rathantara* the north and south bars and the *Bhadra* and *Yajnayajni* the eastern and western short bars at the head and foot.

the *Riks* and *Samans*, the eastern and western cornices, the *Yajus* the northern and southern cornices, the moonbeams, the cushion, the *Udgitha*, the softer covering and Vedic glory the pillars. Brahman is seated thereon. One who knows all this first mounts on it with one foot. Brahman asks him 'who art thou!' One should answer him thus—

"6. I am time, the product of time, born of the Infinite Cause, the Light. I am the light of the year, the soul of all that is past, of the real cause of all things and of the elements. Thou art the Self, "What thou art, I am". Brahman says to him, "Who am I?" He should say, "The True". Brahman again says, "What is that which is true?" (The worshipper should say) "What is distinct from the gods, and the vital airs, is the True (*Sat*). And what is the gods' and the vital airs' is that (*Tyam*). So, by this word (*Satya*) all this is called *Satyam*. Thou art all this". The worshipper then said all this to Brahman. All this is said by the following verse:—"The great and indestructible sage, whose belly is the *Yajus*, head the *Saman*, and form the *Rik*, and who is full of Brahman, is to be known as Brahma. Brahman says to him, "How dost thou obtain my male names?" He should say "By the vital breath". "How the female names?" "By speech." "How the neuter names?" "By the mind". "How smells?" "By the breath" he should say. "How forms?" "By the eye." "How sounds?" "By the ear". "How the flavours of food?" "By the tongue". "How dost thou do thy actions?" "By the two hands." "How dost thou obtain thy pleasures and pains?" "By the body". "How pleasure, dalliance and offspring?" "By the organ of generation". "How motion?" "By the feet" "How thoughts, knowledge and desires?" "By Reason" he should say. Then Brahman says to him, "This world of mine, consisting of water (the chief element and the other elements) is thine". He who knows all this obtains whatever glory and extension (or power) belong to Brahman".

This renowned ancient allegory clothed in Vedic Scriptural language has been beautifully explained in modern theistic lore by Tattwabhusan. It is the most illuminating of all the expositions I have come across. I, therefore, make no apology for taxing the reader's patience by reproducing it below in entirety :—

“ Apparently Chitra's description of *devayana* and the *Brahmaloka* gives the picture of an actual route to be followed after death and an actual region in space to be reached by the soul which has given up the gross body but is still wearing an etherial form. But it *really* sets forth the successive stages of a life in God,—a life which may be lived either here or hereafter. Chitra begins by saying that having reached the *devayana* path which evidently means spiritual religion as contrasted with the merely ceremonial or traditional, (the *pitriyana*), the soul reaches successively the regions of Agni, Vayu, Aditya, Varuna, Indra, Prajapati and Brahman. The first six seem to mean Henotheistic forms of religion, the identification of the Supreme Being with one or another of the Vedic gods until a pure idea of God freed from anthropomorphism is reached in the seventh stage. However, even when the divine regions are reached, that is, a pure form of Theism is embraced, there is yet a long way to traverse before one reaches the divine city. At the very beginning of this journey, Brahman calls five hundred of his *apsarasas*, divine nymphs, commands them to meet the pilgrim soul with various divine equipments and to bring him on to the Divine City with honours due to himself (*mamayasasa*). These ‘nymphs’ are of two classes, *ambah* and *ambayabih*, the former being divine texts like “*Satyam jnanam anantam*” which lead us to God, and the latter the mental powers which enable us to conceive and apprehend the Divine Reality. The ‘nymphs’ carry powder, clothes, fruits, ointments and garlands for the pilgrim. The spiritual nature of these things is evident from the statement that when the messengers meet the pilgrim soul, they adorn him with divine ornaments,—“*Tam Brahmalankarenalankurvanti.*” Thus equipped for his arduous journey, the worshipper of God (*Brahmajnah*), reaches a lake named *Aro Hradah*,—the lake of *Aris* or evil passions. These must be subdued before any progress along the route is possible. Already sufficiently strengthened for the bold feat, the worshipper crosses the lake with his will-power,—“*Manasasatyeti.*” Those lacking the necessary equipment sink into the lake. The next stage is represented by “*Yestiha muhurtah*, the harmful moments,—the injurious way of spending life in fruitless pursuits which is seen even

in many an otherwise good man. Before our pilgrim, thus gifted with self-control and a grim determination, such moments,—such wasteful modes of life,—*apadravanti*, fly away. The third stage of the journey is a river named *Vijara*, “free from senility,” which when crossed, gives one perpetual youth, entire freedom from indolence and despondency. “*Tam manasa atyeti*,—the pilgrim crosses the river by dint of his will-power. He is then said to be freed from both his merits and demerits,—merits which make egotistic men proud of their achievements, and demerits which weigh them down with the thought of unrelieved and unmixed evils. The pilgrim’s dear ones are said to take possession of the former and his enemies the latter. The fourth and final landmark of the route is *ilyobrikshah*, a tree named the ‘earthly’. Even when in a comparatively advanced stage of the spiritual life, one feels he is not fully spiritual. An idea that the world is earthly, material,—that there are things in it which have no spiritual end or purpose,—still haunts him. We cannot reach the divine city until this practical materialism is entirely got rid of and the world is seen to be spiritual, divine, through and through. As soon as the pilgrim-soul attains to this view of the world, “*Tam Brahmagandhah Pravisati*”—the odour of God enters into him. He does not yet directly see God and his abode, but he feels that they are very near. Spiritual endeavours lose the weariness with which the unspiritual go through them. They become attractive and lead the aspirant with the promise of a rich and yet unseen enjoyment. The divine city is now very near : the next march takes him directly before it.

The divine City is called the *Salajya Samasthanam*. Samasthanam means ‘City’. The commentator explains ‘*Salajya*’ thus,—having reservoirs of water with banks as high as bow-strings equal to *sala* trees, that is, as we understand, very deep tanks such as may not be dried up even in the hottest seasons. A true City of God must indeed have such reservoirs with an inexhaustible supply of drink for thirsty souls. However, as the worshipper enters the holy City, “*Tam Brahmarasah-pravistati*”,—the flavour of Brahman enters into him. He directly tastes the presence and loveliness of God. His foretaste of the sweets of true worship is turned into direct experience. Henceforth everything pertaining to God is delightful to him. Grace takes the place of law. But there are degrees in directness also. The divine City is entered, but not yet the divine abode, the holy of holies. Before that, all forms of mediation must be got rid of. Even in what seem very deep and sweet devotions, the thought of human teachers and leaders,—those who have helped men to draw near to God,—is

mixed up with the experience of the divine sweetness,—showing that the truest directness is not yet reached, and the danger of lapsing into man-worship or deva-worship is not yet fully escaped. This fact the Upanishadic sage expresses by saying that at the gate of *Aparajitam Ayatanam*, the impregnable abode of God, there stand Indra and Prajapati, the highest of devas, as *dvaragopau*, gate-keepers. On the approach of the true worshipper, "*Tuu asmad apatravatah*"—they withdraw from him. The implication is that less true worshippers,—those who mix up their worship of the Infinite with that of "incarnations", "great men" and "centres"—are held back. However, as soon as the pilgrim-soul enters the *Aparajitam Ayatanam*, "*Tam Brahmotejah pravisati*. *Tejah* is both light and heat, both wisdom and power. Henceforth there is no more groping in darkness, but more and more light, day after day, and no more compromise with untruth and wilful ignorance. Henceforth also there is no parley with and no yielding to weakness and impious indolence and sluggishness. The true worshipper of God is known above all by the *power* which his words and actions express and radiate. However, our pilgrim is now in the *sabhashthanam*, Council Chamber of God called the *Vibhu* (all-pervading). As the immediate effect of this entrance, "*Tam Brahmayasah pravisati*" the glory of God enters into him. His thoughts, purposes and actions, being now wholly attuned to God's. God himself is glorified in all that he says and does. He takes praise and blame indifferently, for he knows he is but the servant of God and it is God who acts through him. There are indeed egotistic priests, who sometimes ascribe their selfish actions to God. But the distinction between such men and the truly selfless servants of God is so transparent that it does not require much insight to see it. However, the Rishi now describes the Brahman's throne named *Vichakshana* which is *Prajna*, Reason, and his "coach of infinite brightness", *Amitaujasam*—*Paryankam*, which is *Prana*, Life. The description is indeed allegorical but couched in scriptural language, it need not detain us. We rather hurry to the dialogue which follows, that between the finite and the Infinite Spirit. The wisdom of the former is tested by the latter with many a question, the details of which need not detain us. The most important part of it is the affirmation made by the finite of its relation of unity-in-difference with the Infinite. In reply to the question, "*Kosi*"—who art thou?—the worshipper says "*Tvamatmasi Yastvamasi Sohamasi*."—"Thou art the Self, what Thou art, that I am." There is unity of essence or substance, and yet a difference of personality indicated by the distinction of "*Thou*" and "*I*". There is nothing in what follows,—and there is little that follows,—which may imply

that this distinction is obliterated in any higher stage of progress. On the contrary, the Divine City is said to be watered by rivers called *ambayah*, which the commentator explains as "*Upasanarupinyah*," of the form of worship, leading to insight into the divine nature. A city where acts of devotion form the necessary medium of communication cannot represent the monist's heaven of undifferentiated unity. And we have seen that the *devas* are there, not as objects of worship but as worshippers. And we are introduced there into a world of real and not illusory creation, for we are told how Brahman's consort (*priya*) that is his creative power, and her reflection ('*Pratirupa cha chakshushi*'), the individual self in whose knowledge the world is reproduced, weave the creatures like flowers" (*pushpanyavayatanu vaijagani*). The divine promise to the worshipper is, "This world of mine, consisting of water (the chief element as symbolising all elements) is thine". Can the father keep anything back from his son? So the Rishi ends with the words, "He who knows all this obtains whatever glory and power belong to God". And what are these 'glory and power'? Evidently they are wisdom, love, holiness, peace, joy, beauty and sweetness, all of which form the very essence of the divine nature and are beyond time and destruction, stored up eternally in God and ever ready to be communicated to his children."

Chapter II.

The teachings of this chapter belong properly to the Vedic *Karma kanda* (ceremonial portion).

Chapter III.

This deals with the sastric exposition of the doctrine of incarnation, the doctrine of the Logos, the manifestation of God in the fully awakened man which enables him to see that God is his very self and makes him speak in His name. In other words, the chapter explains in what sense the individual Self can declare itself as one with the Universal.

Indra, a DevaRishi, liberated by the knowledge of his identity with Brahman, teaches *Pratardana*, a RigVedic hero, the unity of all things in one undivided consciousness, the presence of the Universal in every individual. The idealism which Chitra expounds is a thoroughly sound one recognising in most unmistakable terms the distinction and

the correlativity of the objective and subjective aspects of the Supreme Reality. Indra in a state of Brahmic consciousness says to Pratardana :

“ Verse 2. “ I am the vital breath. I am the conscious self. Worship me as life, as breath. Life is breath and breath is life. Breath itself is immortality. For life lasts so long as breath exists in the body. It is by the vital breath that one obtains immortality in the other world. By reason, he obtains true conception. He who worships me as life, as immortality, obtains full life in this world. He obtains immortality and indestructibility in the heavenly regions.” Pratardana said : “ On this subject some maintain that all the senses assume unity, for otherwise no one could at the same time make known a name with speech, see a form with the eye, hear a sound with the ear and think with the mind. Assuming unity they perform all these actions one by one. When speech speaks, all the senses speak after it. When the eye sees all the senses see after it. When the ear hears all the senses hear after it. When the mind thinks, all the senses think after it. When breath breathes, all the senses breath after it”. Indra said : “ It is indeed so, but there is yet a pre-eminence (of the vital breath) among the senses.

“ 3. One can live though deprived of speech for we see dumb people. One can live though deprived of sight, for we see blind people. One can live though deprived of hearing, for we see deaf people. One can live though deprived of intellect, for we see infants. One can live though his arms and legs be cut off, for we see such people. But the vital breath is the conscious self that sustains and uplifts the body. Therefore, one should worship it as the *uktha* (made to mean the uplifter by artificial derivation). What is life is consciousness. What is consciousness is life. These two live together in the body and go out together. Of that, this is the knowledge, and this (what follows) the evidence. When this person (*i.e.*, the individual soul) falls asleep and

dreams no dream, he becomes merged (lit-unified) in life. Then speech goes to him with all names, the eye with all forms, the ear with all sounds, and the intellect with all thoughts. When he awakes, then, as from a burning fire sparks go out in all directions, so from this self then senses go out, each towards its seat. From the senses, the powers (or deities) and from the powers, the worlds (*i.e.*, the objects) go out. Of this (question) this is the solution, this the proof. When this person gets ill, and when about to die, he becomes weak and faints, then people say. "His mind has gone out. He neither hears, nor sees nor speaks nor thinks". Then he is merged in that life. Then speech goes to him with all names, the eye with all forms, the ear with all sounds, and the intellect with all thoughts. When he awakes, then, as from a burning fire sparks go out in all directions, so from this self senses go out each towards its seat. From the senses the powers and from powers the worlds go out.

"4. When he goes out of the body, he goes out with all these. Speech gives up all names to him; through speech he obtains all names. The nose gives up all odours to him; through the nose he obtains all odours. The eye gives up all forms to him; through the eye he obtains all forms. The ear gives up all sounds to him; through the ear he obtains all sounds. The intellect gives up all thoughts to him; through the intellect he obtains all thoughts. Thus are all senses merged in life. What is life, that is consciousness; what is consciousness, that is life. These two live together in this body, and go out together. Now we shall explain how all creatures become one in that consciousness.

"5. Speech milked one limb (a breast as it were) of consciousness (*i.e.*, appropriated one portion or aspect thereof); and name (*i.e.*, conception) is its object placed outside. The nose milked one of its limbs and odour is its object placed outside. The eye milked one of its limbs and form is its object placed outside. The tongue milked one of its

world. If there were no elements of the objective world there would be no elements of consciousness. If there were no elements of consciousness, there would be no elements of the objective world. No form or entity is possible from only one of the two sides. This (*i.e.*, the concrete reality) is not many (but one). As the circumference of the wheel of a car is placed on the spokes and the spokes on the nave, so are these elements of the objective world placed on the elements of consciousness and the elements of consciousness placed on life. This life is the conscious Self, blissful, unfading and immortal. He does not increase by virtuous action, nor does he decrease by vicious action. It is he who makes that individual do virtuous deeds whom he wishes to lead up from these worlds. And it is he who makes that individual do vicious deeds whom he wishes to lead down (from these worlds). He is the Guardian of the world. He is the Sovereign of the world. He is the Lord of all. One should know him thus—"He is my Self."

The teachings of Indra given above are of such supreme importance that I am prompted to quote below the conclusions drawn therefrom by Tattwabhusan than whom none in the present day has made a deeper research into western and eastern idealism :—

"By seeing the fundamental unity of subject and object Indra reaches the true Infinite which is neither beyond the finite nor an aggregate of finites, but shines in every finite as its support or ultimate truth. It is the supposed absolute distinction, without unity, of subject and object which divides the world, divides reality and prevents the dividing understanding from grasping the Infinite, the ultimate Reality, beyond which there is nothing. This ultimate Reality is the Subject-Object beyond which nothing is known and nothing can be conceived. However, this view when properly understood, effectively disposes of Yajnavalkya's Subjective Idealism with its corollaries of the impermanence of knowledge and the final merging of the finite in the Infinite. Subjective Idealism of all forms, ancient and modern belittles the objective aspect of reality. This seems to be contingent and changeful, while the subjective aspect seems necessary and per-

manent. But to say so is to indulge in abstractions. Every form of reality, high or low, presents both a subjective and objective side, and when one of them changes, the other does the same. For instance, the piece of paper before me, a very small and apparently negligible part of reality, presents both these sides and would be impossible without anyone of them. It is an object of knowledge and thus necessarily implies me as its knower. But it may seem that though I am necessary for it, it is not necessary for me. Really however, *I as its knower*—that much of me which consists in being its knower, would be impossible without it. And when every aspect of my nature consisting in being the knower of particular objects is abstracted from me, I am really reduced to nothing. In the same manner every change in the object before me represents a change in me. If the paper is torn, if it changes colour, or is burnt, these changes represent changes in my mental life. They are as much objects of my knowledge as the paper when unchanged. A mere subject without objects, a merely unchanged reality not related to change,—the idol of Mayavada or Subjective Idealism, is therefore, an abstraction. It will be seen in the same manner that an Infinite unrelated to the finite, a Universal without relation to particulars or individuals,—the idol of the Absolute Monist,—is also an abstraction. Our Philosopher Indra, seems to see this truth also, though he is not fully explicit on this point. He says one should know the Absolute thus—“He is my self”. What reality is represented by “my”? It is the finite individual, the subject of growing knowledge and of instructions and injunctions like “One should know” and “One should act so”. It is created by the Absolute’s eternal activity of self-distinction—this process of distinguishing himself from his creations and yet integrating the latter with him,—a process unintelligible to the mere analytic understanding but not so to the synthesising Reason. If the Absolute were alone, without necessary relation to finite selves, the ethical and spiritual world which consists of *persons* related to one another would be impossible *even for a single moment*. A solitary Absolute could not imagine himself for a moment without self-contradiction as distinct from objects in time and space and distinct from persons other than himself. The presence of the objective world and of finite intelligences knowing the Infinite is therefore a conclusive evidence of the truth that the Absolute is not *ekamevadwitiyam* in the monistic sense, but that he is necessarily related to finite objects and persons. All this is implied in the philosophy of Indra which we have taken pains to interpret.”

Chapter IV seems to be supplementary to the third.

It is a dialogue between Ajatasatru, king of Kasi, and Balaki, a Bramana, proud of his learning. We have already noticed this story in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad—Chapter II—first Brahmana.

CHAPTER VII. THE KENOPANISHAD.

This Upanishad derives its name from the first word '*kena*'. It is also called Talavakara Upanishadas it belongs to the Talavakara branch of the Sama Veda. It establishes the unity and the sole omnipotence of the Supreme Being. In other words, it declares that all power belongs to Brahman who is the Controller of the senses, the Supreme Subject of whom all things are objects and that by His power all creatures live, move and act. That the individual has no power which is not derived from and sustained by the Universal is illustrated by a beautiful story of a battle between the celestial gods and the asuras (demons) and the former's victory over the latter.

"1. Under whose leading does the understanding go to its objects? Under whose leading does the vital power, the chief of the internal organs, does its work? Under whose leading do people utter these words? and what God leads the eyes and the ears to their objects?

"2. It is he who is the ear of the ear, the understanding of the understanding, the speech of speech. He is the life of life, the eye of the eye. The wise, giving up the error that these organs are the self, become immortal after their departure from this world".

It may be noted that it is not the wonders of the external world that stimulate this searching enquiry; the question is not who it is that moves the sun and the moon and the stars in their tractless paths, not who it is that has created the earth and the heavens. The problem that stirs the wonder of the sage more profoundly and intimately is the mystery of the human mind. How do the mind, the vital powers, the

organs of the speech, the eyes and the ears do their work? And the spontaneous answer is that there is One who is the Ear of the ear, the Mind of mind, the Life of life, and the Eye of eyes; by whom the senses, the life and the mind are sustained and regulated.

“3. The eye does not go there, *i.e.*, to Brahman, the speech does not go there, neither does the understanding. We do not know it; we do not know how to impart instruction about it. It is distinct from and higher than all known and unknown things. We have heard this from former teachers who have explained it to us.

“4. That which is not revealed by speech, that by which speech is revealed—, know that alone to be Brahman. It is not this,—what people worship.

“5. That which people cannot conceive with the understanding, that by which the understanding is conceived, as wisemen say—know that alone to be Brahman. It is not this—what people worship.

“6. That which people do not see with the eyes, that by whose power people see visible objects,—know that alone to be Brahman. It is not this—what people worship.

“7. That which people do not hear with their ears, that by which the ears are heard, *i.e.*, known,—know that alone to be Brahman. It is not this—what people worship.

“8. That which people do not smell with the organ of smelling, that by which the power of smelling is led, know that alone to be Brahman. It is not this—what people worship.”

From the above verses it will be seen that the Rishi identifies Brahman with the knowing subject implied in all knowledge, and in that sense pronounces Him to be different from all known and knowable objects. But by identifying Brahman with the subject of knowledge here and elsewhere the Upanishads do not make Him either plural or limited. The subject of all knowledge is conceived by them to be one

and undivided and identical with Brahman. There is no other subject or knower than He ; He therefore cannot be known by, that is, become the object of any one else's knowledge. As Sankara says in his comment on the verse succeeding those quoted above :

"It is clearly affirmed by all the Vedantas that Brahman is the Self of all knowers. There is no other knower than Brahman of whom Brahman can be an object of knowledge, for the existence of any other knower is denied by the text "*There is no other knower than this.*"

The text referred to by Sankara occurs in the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*. (Seventh and eighth Brahmanas of Chapter III).

In passing, it may be added, that the same truth is echoed by the *Bhagavad Gita* in the thirteenth Chapter, where Krishna, representing the Supreme Being says : "O Bharata, know me to be the subject in all bodies or objects." It will be further seen from the above that the Rishis saw the hand of God even in our ordinary perceptions. To them, all knowledge, the knowledge of even material objects, was the result of divine inspiration.

"9. If you think you have known Brahman well, then surely you have known little of Brahman's nature. What you have seen of Brahman in the gods is also little. So Brahman should be enquired into by you. (After duly enquiring into Brahman, the pupil says) I think I know it.

"10. I do not think I know Brahman well. I neither do not know it nor know it. Whoever amongst us understands the proposition, "I neither do not know it nor know it," does know it.

"11. He who thinks he knows Brahman, does not know it, he who thinks he does not know Brahman, does know it. Brahman is unknown to the wise and known to the ignorant.

"12. Brahman is known to those who know it to be the knower of all ideas. Those who know it thus obtain immortality. Power is obtained by those who know the nature

of the Self and immortality by those who have knowledge relating to the Self.

“ 13. If a man knows Brahman in this life, he is blessed; if he does not know it here, great destruction follows. The wise having realised Brahman in all things, become immortal after their departure from this world.”

Verses 14 to 34 describe the parable of the victory of the celestial gods over the asuras (demons). Raja Ram Mohan Roy has, in his translation of this Upanishad, sketched this parable very graphically. I have, therefore, adopted for this portion his translation and narration.

“ In a battle between the celestial gods and the demons, God obtained victory over the latter, in favour of the former (or properly speaking, God enabled the former to defeat the latter) ; but upon this being gained, the celestial gods acquired their respective dignities and supposed that this victory and glory were entirely owing to themselves. The Omnipresent Being having known their boast appeared to them *with an appearance beyond description*.

They could not know what adorable appearance it was. They consequently said to fire or properly speaking the god of fire “ Discover thou, O god of fire, what adorable appearance this is.” His reply was, “ I shall.” He proceeded fast to that adorable appearance, which asked him, “ Who art thou?” He then answered, “ I am fire and I am the origin of the Veda;” *that is, “ I am a well-known personage.”* The Supreme Omnipotence upon being thus replied to, asked him again “What power is in so celebrated a person as thou art?” He replied, “ I can burn to ashes all that exists in the world.” The Supreme Being then having laid a straw before him, said to him, “ Canst thou burn this straw?” The god of fire approached the straw, but could not burn it, though he exerted all his power. He then unsuccessfully retired, and told the others, “ I have been unable to discover what adorable appearance this is.” Now they all said to wind (or properly

to the god of wind), "Discover thou, O god of wind, what adorable appearance this is." His reply was 'I shall.' He proceeded fast to that adorable appearance, which asked him, "Who art thou?" He then answered, "I am wind and I pervade unlimited space ;" *that is "I am a well-known personage."* The Supreme Being upon being thus replied to asked him again, "What power is in so celebrated a person as thou art?" He replied, "I can uphold all that exists in the world." The Supreme Being then having laid a straw before him, said to him, "Canst thou uphold this straw?" The god of wind approached the straw, but could not hold it up, though he exerted all his power. He then unsuccessfully retired and told the others, "I have been unable to discover what adorable appearance this is." Now they said to the god of atmosphere (Indra) "Discover thou, O revered god of atmosphere, what adorable appearance this is." His reply was "I shall." He proceeded fast to that adorable appearance, which vanished from his view. He met at the same spot a woman, *the goddess of instruction*, arrayed in golden robes in the shape of the most beautiful Uma. He asked, "What was that adorable appearance?" She replied, "It was the Supreme Being owing to whose victory you are all advanced to exaltation." The god of atmosphere, from her instruction, knew that it was the Supreme Being *that had appeared to them. He at first communicated that information to the gods of fire and of wind.* As the gods of fire, wind, and atmosphere had approached to the adorable appearance and had perceived it, as also they had known, *prior to the others*, that it was indeed God *that appeared to them* they seemed to be superior to the other gods. As the god of atmosphere had approached to the adorable appearance, and perceived it, and also as he knew, *prior to every one of them*, that it was God *that appeared to them*, he seemed not only superior to every other god, but also *for that reason* exalted above the gods of fire and wind.

The foregoing is a divine figurative representation of the Supreme Being ; meaning that in one instance he shines at once *over all the universe* like the illumination of lightning ; and in another, that he disappears as quick as the twinkling of an eye. Again, it is represented of the Supreme Being, that pure mind conceives that it approaches to him as nearly as possible. Through the same pure mind a pious man thinks of him and consequently application of the mind to him is repeatedly used. That God, *who alone in reality has no resemblance and to whom the mind cannot approach* is adorable by all living creatures ; he is therefore called “*adorable*” ; he should, according to the prescribed manner, be worshipped. All creatures revere the person who knows God in the manner thus described. The pupil now says, “Tell me, O spiritual father, the Upanishad or the principal part of the Veda.” The spiritual father makes this answer, “I have told you the principal part of the Veda which relates to God alone and indeed told you the Upanishad, of which, austere devotion, control over the senses, performance of religious rites, and the remaining parts of the Veda, as well as those sciences that are derived from the Vedas, are *only* the feet ; and whose altar and support is truth.” He who understands it as thus described having relieved himself from sin, acquires eternal and unchangeable beatitude.”

CHAPTER VIII. THE MAUNDUKYOPANISHAD.

This Upanishad is so called after Maundukya, its author. It is made up of twelve verses, describes the three states of the self—waking, dreaming and dreamless sleep—and its transcendent aspect which is untouched by these changes.

“1. *Aum*.—this syllable is all this. Its exposition is past, present and future, all this is nothing but *Aum*. Whatever else is beyond the three times, that also is nothing but ‘*Aum*’!

“2. Verily all this is Brahman. This Self is Brahman. This same Self has four aspects.

" 3. *Vaisvanara*, the controller of the waking state conscious of external objects, with seven limbs and nineteen faces and enjoying gross objects, is the first aspect.

" 4. *Taijasa*, the controller of the dreaming state, conscious of internal objects, with seven limbs and nineteen faces and enjoying subtle objects, is the second aspect.

" 5. That state in which the sleeper neither desires any object nor dreams any dream, is profound sleep. *Prajna*, the controller of the state of profound sleep, the unified, the concentration of knowledge, the blissful, the enjoyer of bliss, and the knowledge-faced, is the third aspect.

" 6. This is the Lord of all, this is omniscient, this is the controller of the heart, this is the source of all and the cause of the origin and destruction of things.

" 7. That which is not conscious of internal objects, nor of external objects nor of objects in the middle state, which is neither conscious nor unconscious, which is unseen, which cannot be used, which is intangible, undefinable, inconceivable, indescribable, object of the intuition of one's Self, beyond the five classes of sensible objects, the undifferentiated, the good, without a second—that the wise conceive as the fourth aspect. He is the Self, he is to be known.

" 8. That Self is to be spoken of as the syllable *Aum*. That is to be spoken of as having measures. The aspects are the measures, and the measures the aspects. They are A. U. and M."

" 12. The fourth, *Aum*, as without measure, incapable of being used, the blissful, without second, is really the Self. He enters the Self with the Self who knows thus, who knows thus."

CHAPTER IX. THE MUNDAKA UPANISHAD.

This is an Upanishad of the Atharva Veda. It is called the shaving Upanishad because it removes the errors of the mind as effectively as a mundaka or razor removes hair from the head or face. Says Max-Muller :

"The title is all the more strange because Mundaka, in its commonest acceptation, is used as a term of reproach for Buddhist mendicants, who are called '*Shavelings*' in opposition to the Brahmanas who dress their hair carefully, and often display by its peculiar arrangement either their family or their rank. Many doctrines of the Upanishads are, no doubt, pure Buddhism, or rather Buddhism is on many points the consistent carrying out of the principles laid down in the Upanishads. Yet for that very reason, it seems impossible that this should be the origin of the name, unless we suppose that it was the work of a man, who was in one sense, a *Mundaka*, and yet faithful to the Brahmanic law."

The Upanishad is divided into three mundakas of two sections each. Its only object is to teach the highest knowledge, the knowledge of Brahman, which according to it cannot be obtained either by sacrifices or external observances, but by such teaching only as is imparted in the Upanishad. A man may a hundred times restrain his breath, etc., but without the Upanishad, his ignorance does not cease. Nor is it right to continue for ever in the performance of sacrificial and other good works, if one wishes to obtain the highest knowledge of Brahman. The Sanyasin alone, who has given up everything, is qualified to know and to become Brahman. And though it might seem from Vedic legends that *Grihastas* also who continued to live with their families, performing all the duties required of them by law, had been in possession of the highest knowledge, this, we are told is a mistake. According to the author of this Upanishad, works and knowledge can be as little together as darkness and light.

The immediate teacher of this Upanishad was one Rishi Angirasa who expounded it to Saunaka, a great householder, who asked him, "what is that on knowing which all this becomes known,"—a question similar to the one put by Uddalaka Aruni to his son Swetaketu in the Chandogya Upanishad.

The first Mundaka distinguishes the Upanishads or science of Brahman as the Para or supreme science (*Jnana kanda*) from the Vedic mantras and ritual—the inferior

science, Karma kanda. The latter leads to perishable though enjoyable states of existence, a series of births; while the former leads to a final and eternal union with the Supreme Being.

Section i—"3. Verily, Saunaka, the great householder, coming to Angiras, according to due form, asked, Sir, what is that on knowing which all this becomes known?

"4. He said to him, verily, those who know Brahman say that two sciences are to be known, the higher and the lower.

"5. Of these, the Rigveda, the Yajurveda, the Samaveda, the Atharvaveda, Siksha (the sciences of Vedic pronunciation), Kalpa (the science of Vedic ceremonial), Grammar, Niruktam (the science of Vedic exposition), Chhandas (the science of Vedic metre) and Astronomy are lower sciences; while that by which the undecaying One can be known is the higher.

"6. That source of things which the wise see is invisible, intangible, uncaused, uncoloured, without eyes and ears, without hands and feet, eternal, omnipresent, all-pervading, extremely subtle and undecaying.

"7. As a spider gives out and takes in (its thread), as plants grow on the earth, as hairs come out from a living person, so, in this world, does everything come out of the undecaying One.

"9. From him, who is all-knowing and all-perceiving, whose penance consists in knowledge, were produced this lower Brahman, name, form and primal matter."

(The prior operating sensitive particle of the world is styled lower Brahman, the source of the faculties).

Section ii "8. Fools living in darkness but deeming themselves wise and learned, wander about, constantly tormented by various ills, like blind man led by a blind man.

"9. Fools living in darkness in various ways, flatter themselves with the thought "we are successful." Since those who are devoted to deeds (chiefly sacrificial, as pre-

scribed in the Vedas) do not know (the science of Brahman) on account of attachment; they, when the fruit of their deeds is spent out, become subject to sorrow and fall down.

“ 10. Fools considering sacrifices and beneficial deeds (like digging tanks and wells) to be the highest thing know no other good. Enjoying pleasures at the height of heaven, gained by good deeds, they re-enter this or an inferior world.

“ 11. Those wise men, with tranquil hearts, who live in the forest on alms, and practise discipline and reverence, become sinless and repair, through the way of the sun, to the place where lives that immortal undecaying Person.

“ 12. Having considered the (vanity of the) world gained by deeds, the knower of Brahman should be free from attachment. The uncreated cannot be gained by deeds. For knowing it particularly he should go, fuel in hand, to a teacher versed in the Vedas and devoted to Brahman.

“ 13. When he goes to him with a heart wholly tranquilised, with his passions controlled, that wise man teaches, in proper form, that science of Brahman by which that true and undecaying Person can be known.”

The futility of Vedic ceremonies could not have been condemned more ruthlessly than in verses 8 to 10 of this section. According to Sankara verse 11 refers to those who know the uselessness of sacrifices and have attained to a knowledge of the qualified Brahman. They live in the forest as *Vanaprasthas* and *Sanyasins*, practising *tapas*, i.e., whatever is proper for their state, and *Sradha*, i.e., a knowledge of *Hiranyagarbha*. The wise are the learned *Grihastas*, while those who live on alms are those who have forsaken their family.

The second Mundaka speaks of the nature of Brahman as the primal source of all beings and things, tangible and intangible, of meditation on him with the help of the sacred syllable “Aum.”

Section i. "Verse 1. This is true,—As sparks, similar to fire, come out of a blazing fire by thousands, so my dear, various creatures come out of the undecaying One, and also return to it.

This and other illustrations prove that creation is only coming out of what already existed potentially in the Brahman.

"2. That divine Person is incorporeal, he is within and without, unborn, without breath, without a sensorium, pure higher than the high, undecaying person (the lower Brahman).

"3. From it have come out *Prana*, the sensorium, all the senses, ether, air, fire, water and the earth, the container of all.

"4. Heaven is his head, the sun and the moon are his eyes, the quarters his ears, the uttered Vedas his speech, air his breath, and the world his heart. Out of his two feet has come out the earth. This Person is the Inner Self of all creatures.

"5. From him has come out Heaven, of which the sun is the light. Rain comes out of the soma juice, and plants grow on the earth. Man pours seed into woman and thus many creatures come out of the Person.

"6. From him have risen the *Rik*, *Saman* and *Yaju* verses, the initiation rite, all the sacrifices called *Kratu*s (in which the fastening poles for sacrificed animals are used), gifts, the year, the sacrificer and the worlds, in which the sun and the moon shine with purifying rays.

"7. And from him have come out the various kinds of gods, *sadhya*s (a species of demi-gods), men, beasts and birds, and also the up-going and down-coming breath, rice, barley, discipline, reverence, truth and law.

"8. From him arise the seven *Pranas*, the seven flames, *i.e.*, the five senses, the sensorium and the understanding, the fuel (*i.e.*, the objects of the senses) and the seven sacrifices (*i.e.*, the seven kinds of knowledge gained through the senses

and the intellect), these seven worlds in which the breaths and the heart placed by sevens (in each creature) move about.

“ 9. From him come out the seas and all the hills, and from him flow rivers of all kinds. From him also arise all plants and the sap wherewith the inner self subsists with the elements.

“ 10. The Person alone is all this : he is karma (*i.e.*, deeds), discipline, and the supreme, undecaying Brahman. He who knows him as hidden in the heart, my dear, cuts the root of ignorance even here.

Section ii. “ 1. Brahman is manifested and very near ; it goes by the name “ moving in the heart ” and is the great shelter. All this, whatever moves, breathes and winks exists in this. Know that which is gross and subtle, adorable, the highest, and beyond the understanding of creatures.

“ 2. That which is shining, smaller than an atom, in which rest the worlds and their inhabitants, is the undecaying Brahman. It is life, and it is speech, and the sensorium. It is truth, it is immortal. That is to be hit, hit it, my dear.

“ 3. Taking the bow, the great weapon, spoken of in the Upanishads, aim the arrow sharpened by worship. Drawing the bow with a mind fixed on that, hit that same, undecaying One, my dear.

“ 4. *Aum* is the bow, the mind is the arrow, Brahman is that mark. It is to be hit with a tranquil heart. One should become one with it as an arrow becomes one with the mark.

“ 5. Know that One Self alone in which heaven, the earth, the sky, and the sensorium, with all the vital airs, are woven, give up other words. It is the bridge of immortality.

“ 6. In the heart, in which the arteries are fixed, as he moves in the nave of a chariot-wheel, he moves about, taking different forms. Meditate on the self thus, *Aum*. May it be all right with you in your attempt to pass to the other side of darkness.

" 7. This Self who is all-knowing, all perceiving, whose glory is here in the earth, is seated in the bright city of Brahman, in the ether of the heart. He whose essence is mind, and who is the guide of the vital air and the body, is seated, having placed the heart in the body. The wise see, by the eye of right knowledge, that which shines as bliss, as immortal.

" 8. The knot of the heart is cut, all doubts are dissolved and his (*i.e.* of the wise man's) deeds cease, when the Higher and Lower (Brahman) is seen.

" 9. In the bright and excellent sheath exists Brahman, the pure, without parts, the bright, the light of light-giving bodies, which the knowers of Self know.

" 10. The sun does not shine there, nor do the moon and the stars. These lightnings do not shine there, how can this fire? After that shining One alone does all shine; all this shines by its light" (see *Katha* V—15).

The Third Mundaka treats of the nature of Brahman in continuation of that described in the second mundaka and of final union with him.

Section i.—" Verse 1. Two birds, related to each other. and friends, are sheltered in the same tree. One of them eats sweet fruits, while the other looks on without eating.

This famous verse indicates the relationship of the human soul with God. It describes the human soul and the Divine soul as two birds dwelling on the same tree, of whom, the one, the human soul, eats the sweet fruits of the tree, while the other looks at it without eating. This is understood to symbolise the relationship of the human soul and God. Though dwelling together in the same tree which is the human body and eternally united, the human soul alone eats the fruits of the tree, that is to say, enjoys the fruits of his actions, while his companion, God, only looks at it without eating the fruits, which means the results of man's actions, good or bad, do not attach to God, though he is eternally united to man. Svetasvatara—chapter IV-6 expresses the same idea.

"2. Man attached to the same tree, is deluded and grieves through want of power. When he sees the other, the adored Lord and his glory, he becomes free from grief.

"3. When the wise man sees the gold coloured (*i.e.*, luminous) Person, the Creator, the Lord, the source of (the lower) Brahman, he is freed from merit and demerit, becomes spotless and attains the highest equanimity.

"4. He who shines through all things is life. When the wise man knows him, he speaks nothing by departing from him. He finds joy in the Self, his love goes to the Self, and he becomes active. Such a one is the chief among those who know Brahman.

"5. This Self, bright and full of light, who exists inside the body and whom sinless devotees see, is always attainable by truth, by discipline, by right knowledge and by *Brahmacharya*.

"6. Truth alone triumphs, and not untruth. By truth is opened the way of the gods, by which sages, freed from desire, reach the place where exists that excellent abode of the True one.

"7. It is large, bright, and of an inconceivable form. It appears subtler than the subtle. It is farther than far; and also near. It is hidden in the heart of those who see it even here.

"8. He cannot be perceived by the eye, nor by speech nor by the other senses. He cannot be obtained by austerities and deeds. When one's heart is purified through pure knowledge, he perceives that indivisible One by meditation.

"9. This subtle Self, in whom rest the vital airs in five forms, is to be known with the mind. The hearts of all creatures are permeated by the senses. The Self shines when the heart is purified."

The truth conveyed in verses 8 and 9 bears close similarity with the saying of Jesus: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." (Mathew Chap. V-8). Both Jesus and

the author of Mundaka Upanishad reserve the beatitude of God vision for the pure-hearted. In other words, according to the Mundaka Upanishad, purity of heart is final and essential condition of seeing God, and brahmacharya, tapash, practice of truth and complete knowledge are the means of attaining the purity of heart. The same idea is conveyed in the *Katha Upanishad*. II.-24.

Section ii.—"Verse 1. He knows that highest home, Brahman in which everything rests, and which shines bright. Those wise men, who freed from desire, worship the Person pass beyond this seed (*i.e.*, earthly existence).

"2. He who thinks on objects of desire and desires them is born in those places (where these desires can be gratified). All the desires of him who has given up his desires and knows his true Self, cease even here.

"3. The Self cannot be obtained by teaching the Vedas, nor by intellect, nor by a great knowledge of the scriptures. *He is obtained by him alone whom he elects. To him this Self reveals his own nature.*"

The very same idea is conveyed in the Katha Upanishad (Chap. II-23).

"4. The Self cannot be obtained by a powerless person, nor by indifference, nor by mere austerities without detachment (from worldly things). The soul of the wise man who exerts by these means, enters Brahman, our home.

"5. Having obtained this, sages are satisfied with wisdom, their true self is manifested, their attachment ceases, and they become tranquil. Obtaining the Omnipresent everywhere, those wise men with their minds disciplined wholly enter into him.

"6. All those ascetics who have properly known the object of the science of the *Vedanta*, whose hearts are purified by giving up worldly things, who have gained the highest immortality, are wholly liberated in the Brahma worlds at the time of final death.

"7. The fifteen parts (of the individual self) go to their causes, and the senses to their corresponding deities. The deeds and the Self consisting in understanding,—all become one with the highest, undecaying one.

"8. As flowing rivers are absorbed in the sea, giving up their names and forms, so the wise man freed from name and form, enters the Divine Person who is higher than the high."

This verse indicates the exact nature of the identification of the knower with Brahman. It declares that the individual on having attained the knowledge of God loses his separate individuality and is merged into God. This, of course, is the well-known monistic theory which was fully developed by Sankara in later times.

I quote below Tattwabhusan's interpretation of this verse :—

"The figure is likely to mislead ; but it is only a figure and must not be strained. When once the inward change that comes with enlightenment becomes familiar to the mind, the figure itself does not seem to be an inapt one. The enlightened soul feels that it is not different from the Infinite but one with it,—that names and forms are unreal when looked at from the divine standpoint, that individuality does not really separate us, as it seems to do from the universal,—that the Divine Being is all-in-all. This consciousness of unity with God as a spiritual fact could scarcely be expressed by a better figure than that of the ocean as comprehending all waters in its all-embracing unity. The conscious subsumption of individual existence in the universal, the renunciation of egotism, is not inaptly represented by the flowing of the river into the sea. The individual mind, so long as it thinks itself different from the Universal, so long as it is bound by banks of egotistic ignorance, is like a river bound by steep banks on both sides. When the finite feels itself to be one with the Infinite, feels that the same undivided consciousness is universal in one aspect and individual in another, it becomes like a river mixing its water with the water of the sea. That the writer who used this figure did not contemplate the annihilation of individuality seems clear also from the *mantra* that follows. If annihilation had been what he intended to teach, he should have stopped at the *mantra* just quoted ; for, what more can possibly be said of one who as an individual, has

ceased to exist? But the writer goes on speaking of the emancipated soul in the following terms :

"9. *Verily he who knows the Supreme Brahman, becomes Brahman in truth. In his family no one is born who does not know Brahman. He passes beyond sorrow, he passes beyond sin. Freed from the knots of the heart, he becomes immortal.*" A teacher of annihilation could scarcely have closed his subject with words like the above.

As the final result of knowing God, the individual is said to become immortal. What is meant by becoming immortal has also been specified by the sage in this very same verse (9). He becomes released from the knots of the heart and crosses or overcomes sorrow and sin and dwells in eternal peace and happiness in the company of God who is Bliss."

CHAPTER X. THE PRASNA UPANISHAD.

This Upanishad is called the *Prasna* or *Shat-prasna Upanishad*, because it embodies six questions and their answers, each of its six chapters being called a *Prasna*. It is ascribed to Atharva Veda. *Pippalada* is mentioned in the Upanishad as the name of the principal teacher who answers the questions put by six seekers after truth. The central teaching of this Upanishad is that *Prana* is born of the Self.

Chapter I deals with creation.

"1. Sukesha, the son of Varadwaja, Satyakama, the son of Sibi, Gargya, the son of Saurya, Kausalya, the son of Asvala, Baidarvi, the son of Bhrigu, Kabandhi, the son of Katya,—these men were devoted to Brahman and lovers of Brahman. Desirous of knowing the Supreme Brahman, they went to the revered Pippalada with fuel in their hands and thinking, "He will tell us everything about that."

"2. The sage said to them, "Spend a year again in austerities, *Brahmacharya* and reverence and then ask such questions as you may desire. If I happen to know, I shall tell you all.

"3. After this, Kabandhi, the son of Katya, approached the sage and asked, "Sir, whence do these creatures spring?"

"4. He said to him, "The Lord of Creatures (Prajapati)

desirous of having creatures, meditated. Having meditated, he produced the pairs *Rai* (primal matter) and *Prana* (Spirit), thinking "These will produce various creatures for me."

"5. Verily the sun is *Prana* and the moon *Rai*. Every thing that has form as well as every thing that is formless, is *Rai*; therefore, a thing that has form is surely *Rai*."

The above may be compared with the description of creation given in Taittiriya Upanishad II-6, which deals with the subject of creation. Creation there also is preceded by meditation. But whereas in the Taittiriya, it is the Brahma who meditated and created all existence; in this Upanishad (Prasna) it is Prajapati, the Lord of creatures, who creates Prana and Rai and not the creator directly. Prana and Rai, mind and matter, in their turn, are the authors of subsequent creation.

Chapter II declares the supremacy of *Prana*, the vital power over the senses and the adoration of the *Prana* by the senses as the manifested Brahman.

"1. Then Vaidarbhi, the son of Bhrigu, asked him 'Sir, how many powers support the animal body? Which of them boast of their power and which one of them is the chief?'"

"2. He said to him "These powers are ether, air, fire, water, the earth, speech, the sensorium, the eye and the ear. These boasted of their power and said, "We pervade the body and support it."

"3. *Prana*, the vital power, the chief, said to them, "Be not deluded. It is I who, dividing myself in five ways pervade and support this." They did not believe this.

"4. He, out of a feeling of pride, showed as if he had gone out. On his going out, all went out; on his staying, all stayed. As, on the chief of the bees flying up, all the bees fly up, and on his staying all stay, so did speech, the sensorium, the eyes and the ear. Then they became contented and began to praise *Prana* in the following manner:—

" 5. This *Prana* burns as fire, this is the sun, this is cloud, this is Indra, this is air, this is the earth ; this power is Rayi and whatever is gross, subtle or undying, is this.

" 6. As spokes are attached to the nave of a chariot-wheel, so do all things,—The Rik, Yajus, Saman, Verses, sacrifice, warriors and priests, rest on *Prana*.

" 7. Thou art the Lord of creatures, thou movest in the womb ; and it is thou who art reborn. O *Prana*, who art living with the senses, it is for thee that these creatures gather offerings.

" 8. Thou art the chief bearer of the gods and the first offering to the *pitris*. Thou art the faithfulness of the sages and thou art Atharva among the Angirasas.

" 9. O *Prana*, thou art Indra in power ; thou, as protector, art Rudra ; thou movest in the sky, and thou art the sun, the lord of the heavenly bodies.

" 10. When thou rainest, these, thy creatures, rejoice to think that food, enough to satisfy their desires will grow.

" 11. Thou art the unpurified (*i.e.*, born pure needing no purification), thou art the Ekarshi fire (of the Angirasas), the consumer of all things, and the good lord ; we are the givers of thy food and thou art the father of air, (or, according to a different reading, thou, O air, art our Father.)

" 12. That form of thine, which is in speech, in the ear and in the eye, which is spread in the sensorium—make that form calm, and do not go out.

" 13. All this, and whatever is in Heaven, are subject to *Prana*. Protect us as a mother protects her sons, and give us wealth and wisdom."

The very same parable is found in the Chandogya Upanishad, Chap. V, though in a different form.

Chapter III declares the process by which *Prana* is born of *Atma* and its correlated manifestation in the body and in nature.

" 1. Then Kausalya, the son of Asvala, asked him, " Sir, whence does this Prana come? How does it come into the body? How does it divide itself and stay? In what form does it go out? How does it support things outside and inside the individual self?

" 2. He said to him; " you ask difficult questions. But you are devoted to Brahman, and so I will tell you.

" 3. This *Prana* is born of the Self. It is spread in, *i.e.*, rests in the Self as the shadow in the human body. It comes into the body on account of the determination of the mind.

" 4. As an Emperor appoints his officers, saying " Rule these villages, rule these villages," so does this *Prana* assign different places to the other *Pranas*.

" 5. He has placed *Apana* (the down-going breath) in the organs of excretion and generation. *Prana* himself, having issued from the mouth and the nose, is seated in the eyes and the ears. In the middle is *Samana*. It is he who distributes equally the food that is offered (into the fire in the stomach) from which are produced the seven lights (the two eyes, the two ears, the two nostrils, and the mouth).

" 6. It is in the heart that the Self exists. Here are these one hundred and one arteries. Those arteries have each a hundred branches. Each of these branches has seventy-two thousand (sub-branches); *vyana* (the pervading breath) moves in these.

" 7. Through one of these veins *Udana* goes up and leads the individual soul to the holy regions through virtuous acts, to the unholy regions through vicious acts, and to the human regions through both kinds of acts.

" 8. The sun is the external *Prana*. He rises and helps this *Prana* in the eyes. The deity that is in the earth supports the *Apana* of man. The ether that is in the middle is *Samana*. Air is *Vyana*.

" 9. Verily heat is *Udana*. So the person whose heat is

spent out, betakes to another body with his senses entered into his sensorium.

"10. He enters *Prana* with whatever state of mind he may have. *Prana* united with heat, leads him with the senses to the desired world.

"11. The wise man who knows *Prana* thus, does not lose his children and he becomes immortal. Here is a sloka on this subject.

"12. One attains immortality, when one knows the origin, entry, situation, activity, the five-fold distribution and the internality of *Prana*."

Chapter IV deals with the mystery of the sleeping and waking states. For the exposition of this subject, please refer to Chapter XII of Part I of this Manual.

"1. Then Gargya, the son of Saurya, asked him, "Which of these senses in the human body sleep? Which of them remain awake? Which power dreams? Which feels this happiness? In what do all rest?"

"2. He said to him, "O Gargya, as on the sun-setting all the rays are united in this orb of light and on his rising again, they again radiate, so, all those are united in the superior power, the sensorium. So, at that time this person does not hear, see, smell, taste, touch, salute, hold, enjoy, give out excretions or walk; people say, "He sleeps."

"3. It is only the vital fires that awake in this cit. Verily this *Apāna* is the Garhapatya fire (the chief sacrificial fire). *Vyāna* is the Anvaharyapachana (the southern fire). As the Ahavaniya fire is made out of the original Garhapatya, so *prāna* is the Ahavaniya.

"4. *Samāna* is so called because he carries on equal these libations of the up-going and down-coming breath. Verily the sensorium is the sacrificer and *Udāna* is the fruit of the sacrifice. He leads this sacrificer to Brahman day after day.

"5. In this state this power experiences a variety of modifications. What was seen, he sees again as seen; what

was heard, he hears again as heard ; what was perceived in various places and directions, he perceives again and again. What was seen, what was unseen, what was heard and what was not heard, what was perceived and what was not perceived, what is existent and what is not existent,—the sensorium being all, sees all.

“ 6. When he is overpowered by light, this power does not dream ; then this happiness arises in this body.

“ 7. Here is an example of that ; as, my dear, birds take shelter in a tree for rest, so all that rests in the Supreme Self.

“ 8. (Those things are) earth and its subtle element (*i.e.*, the pure unmixed essence of earth), water and its subtle element, fire and its subtle element, air and its subtle element, ether and its subtle element, the eyes and what is visible, the ear and what is audible, the nose and what can be smelt, the sense of taste and what can be tasted, the skin and what is tangible, speech and what can be spoken, the hands and what can be handled, the sexual organ and what can be enjoyed, the organ of excretion and what can be given out, the feet and what can be travelled over, the sensorium and what is perceivable, the intellect and what is intelligible, egoity and what can be made its object, imagination and what can be imagined, light and what can be illumined, *Prana* and what can be supported by it.

“ 9. Verily this person who is the seer, the hearer, the smeller, the taster, the perceiver, the thinker, the agent and who has knowledge for his essence,—he rests in the Supreme undecaying Self.

“ 10. Verily, my dear, he who knows that One, which is without shadow, without a body, without redness *i.e.*, colour, bright and undecaying, attains the Supreme undecaying One. He becomes the All-knowing, the All. On this subject there is this sloka.

“ 11. He who knows that undecaying One, my dear, in

whom rests the individual soul, whose essence is knowledge with all the senses, the vital powers and the elements, becomes all-knowing and enters into all things."

Chapter V deals with the effects of meditation on the sacred syllable "Aum".

"1. Then Satyakama, the son of Sibi, asked him, "Sir, he who amongst men meditate on the syllable 'Aum' up to the time of death,—what world does he gain by that?"

"2. He said to him, "O Satyakama, verily this syllable 'Aum' is the higher and the lower Brahman. So, it is by this help that the wise man gains either of these two.

"3. If he meditates on one measure only, *i.e.*, A, he enlightened by that only, soon returns to the earth. The *Rik* verses bring him to the world of men. There, adopting discipline, *Brahmacharya* and reverence, he enjoys greatness.

"4. If he meditates on the second measure, *i.e.*, U in his mind, he goes to Heaven. He is taken up by the *Yajur* verses to the lunar world. Having enjoyed greatness in the lunar world, he returns.

"5. Again, he who meditates on the Supreme Person with the help of the syllable *Aum* in its three measures, reaches the radiant sun. As a snake gets rid of its skin, so he gets rid of sin. He is taken up by the *Saman* verses to the world of the lower Brahman. From this concentration of life (*i.e.*, the source of all life) he sees the Person, higher than the high and pervading all organisms. On this subject there are these slokas."

Chapter VI deals with the sixteen parts of the individual Self and the attainment of true immortality by the merging of these parts in the Supreme.

"1. Then Sukesha, the son of Bharadwaja, asked him, "Sir, Hiranyanabha, a prince of Kosala, came to me and asked this question. "O Son of Bharadwaja, do you know the person with sixteen parts?" I said to that young man, "I do not know this; If I knew this, why should I not tell

you? He who speaks an untruth, dries up to his very root; so I will never speak an untruth." He then mounted his chariot silently and went away. I ask you about him; "where is that person?"

"2. He said to him, "It is, my dear, in the inner body (the heart) that the person exists in whom these sixteen parts grow.

"3. He thought, on whose going out do I go out and on whose staying do I stay?

"4. He brought out *Prana*, and from *Prana* reverence from which came out ether, air, light, water, earth, the senses, and the sensorium. He then brought out food, and from food came out strength, discipline, the mantra (the Vedas), duty and the worlds, and in the worlds arose name (the concept).

"5. An example of this,—As these rivers flowing and going towards the sea, are absorbed, and their name and form cease when the sea is reached, and it is called the sea, so these sixteen parts of this percipient being, which are going towards the Person, are absorbed and their name and form cease when the person is reached and it is called "The Person"; he becomes partless (*i.e.*, indivisible) and immortal. On this subject there is this sloka.

"6. In whom the parts rest, as spokes rest in the nave of a chariot wheel, know that person who should be known, so that death may not grieve you.

"7. Pippalada said to them "Thus far do I know that Supreme Brahman. There is nothing higher than that."

"8. They said, praising him, "You are indeed our father, who have made us cross the river of ignorance, we bow down to the great sages; we bow down to the great sages."

CHAPTER XI. THE SVETASVATARA UPANISHAD.

In this Upanishad Rishi Svetasvatara expounds to a revered band of sages the *nirguna* (transcendent) and *saguna* (immanent) character of the Supreme Being. His creative

power designated as *Maya* by this Rishi alone in the whole of the Upanishadic literature, the unity of all souls in the one and only Self, the germs of the practice of Yoga which later on found their full development in the Sankhya and Yoga philosophy, the genesis of the Bhakti cult or the reverential attachment to God, the state of final liberation or abiding union with God.

The Supreme Being has become more personal in this Upanishad. He is frequently spoken of in the masculine. The terms *Brahman* and *Atman* have become rarer. The term that is mostly used with reference to the Ultimate Reality is *Deva*. Still more significant is the use of the words *Rudra* and *Hara* as names of God,—terms which came into vogue in a later stage of development of Hindu thought and which are not to be found throughout the genuine Upanishadic literature.

At the same time, the Upanishads lay considerable stress on the paramount distinction between the Personality of God and that of man. Incidentally, we may recapitulate here with advantage some of such distinguishing features. While God is without beginning, man, however wide the view he takes of his past, always finds something to limit his vision. He has a relative origin. He is born, while God is unborn. While the Divine consciousness is all comprehensive, the contents of the human, however great in number, are limited even in the wisest of men. While God never forgets anything, man is subject to constant oblivion. While there is no growth and progress for the Eternally-Perfect, the very life and glory of man is in continual growth in perfection. While God is almighty realising His ends without effort and opposition and capable of performing an infinite variety at the same time, man is continually opposed by forces not his own and has to fight his way on little by little. But the most important distinction between God and man is in the moral law. While the moral law is eternally realised in God, so that for Him there is no gulf between the ideal and

the real, with man the law of righteousness is always an ideal, and a life of holiness a process of struggle and growth. While unity with the world, unity with other moral beings is eternally realised in God, so that the very life and breath of God, if we may so speak, is perfect truth, justice and goodness, man's consciousness of unity with his fellow creatures and with his Creator, which is the basis of moral conduct and moral feelings, is a thing slowly realised through ages of effort and by means and appliances of infinite complexity. All these distinctions between God and man, therefore, justify the consciousness of difference from the Divine Being which man feels in whatever mood he may be and which lies at the basis of all religion, worship and morality.

As a necessary corollary from the stress laid on the Personality of God in the Svetasvatara, the Rishi insists, as already stated in Chapter XX of Part I of this Manual, on Bhakti or devotion to God in addition to knowledge as the means to immortality and supreme beatitude. The later Bhakti movement in India, a most precious heritage of humanity, may be considered to have grown mostly out of the teachings of this Upanishad. The doctrine of Grace or Mercy has also first made its appearance in this scripture. We also find that the word "*Bhakti*" is mentioned only in the Svetasvatara. This shows that we are very near the Puranic age. In the Bhagavadgita, we are in the very midst of that period of our history. Svetasvatara Upanishad which consists of six chapters bears many marks of a comparatively later date in the Upanishadic age.

Chapter I.

" 1. The inquirers after Brahman say:—Is Brahman the cause? What are we born from? What cause helps us to live? In what do we rest? What cause helps us to exist either in happiness or in its opposite, Oh knowers of Brahman?

" 2. Is time, nature, necessity, chance, the elements, or

the soul to be thought of as the cause? The connection of these cannot be the cause, for it depends upon the self; and the self also is incapable of creating the world, because it is subject to pleasure and pain.

“3. They who are devoted to meditation have seen hidden by its own properties, the power of God, who One only regulates all those causes including time and the self.”

“6. The transmigrating soul, thinking itself and God as different, is whirled in that big Brahma-wheel, in which all live and rest. When it is blessed by Him, it attains immortality.”

In this verse the Rishi describes what is called in the Vedanta bondage and liberation. Bondage consists in thinking oneself different from God—as having a self of one's own different from the Supreme Self and liberation means freedom from this belief by the blessing of God. The state of bondage, therefore, is one not of mere ignorance but also of suffering—suffering caused by various passions and desires, and the state of liberation on the other hand, is one of freedom from desires—desires for finite objects,—and freedom from the suffering caused by such desires.

“7. The Supreme Brahman is sung (in the **Vedanta**) In Him rest the three (the individual soul, its objects and the mover), and He is the firm support and the unchangeable. Those who know Brahman and are **devoted** to him are freed from re-incarnation by knowing Him who transcends the world.

“8. The Lord supports all this, which is connected,—the changeful and the changeless, the manifested and the unmanifested. The powerless (individual) self is bound on account of its being subject to pleasure and pain; but it is freed from all bonds when it knows God.

“9. There are two,—the knowing and the not-knowing the unborn Lord and the individual self. There is one unborn (nature) provided with things for the enjoyment of the latter

The Infinite Self, which takes all forms, is not an agent (*i.e.* not subject to the law of cause and effect). When the aspirant knows this Brahman having these three aspects, (he is liberated).

“ 10. Nature is changeful ; Hara immortal and unchangeable. The One God regulates Nature and the self. By meditating on Him by communion and unity with Him the world-illusion is at the end, completely removed.

“ 11. “By knowing God all bonds are broken, and all suffering having ceased, the round of birth and death is stopped. By meditating on him, the third stage—the possession of all powers, comes ; but he who is free from desires is detached (from all belongings).”

This aloneness, kevalatvam, is produced by the knowledge that the individual self is one with the Divine Self and that both the individual and the Divine Self are only phenomenal forms of the true Self, the Brahman.

“ 12. This Eternal one seated in the soul is to be known. There is nothing higher than this to be known. Knowing the individual self, Nature and God, knowing all to be this three-fold Brahman above indicated, (the aspirant obtains liberation).

“ 13. As the form of fire in its source (*i.e.* in firewood, for instance) is not seen, but its subtle essence is yet unextinguished and it is again and again to be seen by means of (rubbing together two pieces of) wood, its source, so, the case being the same in both instances, the self is seen in the body by uttering *Pranava* (syllable *Om*).”

This metaphor, says Max-Muller, like most philosophical metaphors in Sanskrit, is rather obscure at first sight, but very exact when once understood. Fire, as produced by a fire drill is compared to the Self. It is not seen at first, yet it must be there all the time ; its *linga* or subtle body cannot have been destroyed, because as soon as the stick, the *indhana*, is drilled in the underwood, the *yoni*, the fire becomes visible.

In the same way, the Self, though invisible during a state of ignorance, is there all the time and is perceived when the body has been drilled by the *Pranava*, i.e., after, by a constant repetition of the sacred syllable (*Om*), the body has been subdued, and the ecstatic vision of the Self has been achieved.

“ 14. By making one's body one of the two pieces of firewood and *pranava* as the other piece, one should practise meditation, which is like rubbing, and thereby see God, who is hidden like fire.

“ 15. As oil is found in linseeds, butter in curds, water in river-beds (full of sand); so, he who seeks the Self, with truth and austerities, finds it in himself.

“ 16. He finds the all-pervading Self, who lies hidden as butter in milk, who is obtainable by self-knowledge and austerities, and who is described in the *Upanishads* as the Highest.”

Chapter II.

“ 8. Making his body with its three raised parts steady and placing his senses into the heart with his intellect, the wiseman should cross all the fearful streams by means of the rafter-like *Om*, the symbol of Brahman.

“ 9. In this matter, the aspirant, stopping the movements of his limbs, and controlling his breath, should, when the breath has become feeble, respire through his nostrils alone. The wise man should be steady and restrain this mind, which is like a chariot with a naughty horse yoked to it.

“ 10. He should join (his mind to Brahman) in a clean and level place without pebbles, fire and sand, favourable to the mind by the sound, water, huts and other things near it, and not painful to the eyes, and adjacent to a cave and a cottage guarded from the wind.

“ 11. In the practice of *yoga*, phantoms of mist, smoke the sun, air, fire, fireflies, lightning, crystal and the moon arise as premonitions of the revelation of Brahman.

“ 12. When earth, water, fire, air and ether arise, when the five-fold characteristic of *Yoga* appears, the aspirant gains a body full of the fire of *Yoga* and is free from disease, old age and suffering.”

The five-fold characteristic of yoga, *i.e.*, the *Yoga-guna* is described as the quality of each element, *i.e.*, smell of the earth, taste of water, etc. It seems that the perception of these *gunas* is called *yoga-pravritti*. Thus by fixing the thoughts on the tip of the nose, a perception of heavenly scent is produced; by fixing it on the tip of the tongue, a perception of heavenly taste; by fixing it on the point of the palate, a heavenly colour; by fixing it on the middle of the tongue, a heavenly touch; by fixing it on the roof of the tongue, a heavenly sound. By means of these perceptions, the mind is supposed to be steadied, because it is no longer attracted by the outward objects themselves.

“ 13. They say that lightness, health, freedom from avarice, brightness of colour, sweetness of tone, a pleasant scent and the smallness of excretions are the first results of *Yoga*.

“ 14. As a piece of metal covered with mud looks bright when properly washed, so the soul which sees its true Self alone becomes satisfied and free from suffering.

“ 15. Where one practising *Yoga* truly sees Brahman by seeing his self, as one sees objects by a lamp, when he knows the unchangeable God, unsullied by any object, he is freed from all bonds.

“ 16. It is this God who is the four cardinal points and the other points. It is he who was the first-born (the cosmic soul, *Hiranyagarbha*) and who is in the womb. It is he who is born and will be born, and who, with his face everywhere, exists behind all persons.

“ 17. The God who is in fire, who is in water, who interpenetrates the whole world, who is in herbs, who is in big trees—to that God I bow down again and again.”

Chapter III.

This chapter represents the Highest Self as the personified Deity, as the Lord, Isa or Rudra, under the sway of his own creative power Prakriti or Maya.

" 1. The one only Snarer, who regulates all worlds by his powers, who is the cause of both the creation and preservation of the world, they who know him become immortal.

" 2. Rudra, who regulates all worlds, by his powers, is one only—the wise do not acknowledge a second. He exists behind all persons. He creates all the worlds, preserves them and rolls them up at the end.

" 3. Everywhere are his eyes and everywhere his face ; everywhere are his arms and everywhere his feet. That one God having created heaven and the earth, endowed some creatures with arms and some with wings.

" 4. He who is the cause of the birth and power of the gods, Rudra, the lord of all, the omniscient, who, at the beginning, begot Hiranyagarbha, may He grant us good understanding!

" 5. O Rudra who livest in our mountain and spreadest happiness, look upon us with that benign form of thine which is auspicious, shorn of terror, and imparts holiness.

" 6. O Thou who livest in our mountain and spreadest happiness in it, thou, the preserver of our hills, the bow that thou holdest in thy hand for destruction—make it auspicious; do not slay either men or the world.

" 7. Those who know the Supreme Brahman, great and transcending the world, present in everybody, hidden in all things, the Lord who alone pervades the world, become immortal.

" 8. I know this great Person, shining like the sun and transcending the world of darkness. It is only by knowing him that one escapes death ; there is no other way to go.

" 9. Than whom there is nothing higher or lower ; than whom there is nothing greater or less ; who alone

exists in space, silent as a tree ; by that Person is all this filled.

“ 10. Who transcends the world, who is formless, above all suffering ; those who know him become immortal, but others become miserable.

“ 11. His are all faces, heads and necks, and he is seated in the hearts of all. The Lord is all-pervading and so he, the Good, impenetrates all things.

“ 12. Verily, the (Supreme) Person is the great and is the soul's guide. He shows the way to the state of perfect holiness, he is the light and he is unchangeable.

“ 13. The Inner Self, the Person of the measure of the thumb, lives always in the heart of all. That giver of wisdom is revealed by the heart and by meditation. They who know him become immortal.

“ 14. The (Supreme) Person has a thousand heads, a thousand eyes and a thousand feet. Enclosing the earth on all sides, he stands beyond by ten finger-breadths.

“ 15. It is the (Supreme) Person who is all this, whatever is and whatever will be. He is also the guide to Immortality, and the guide of all who live by bread.

“ 16. Everywhere are his hands and feet ; everywhere are his eyes, head and face. Everywhere in the world has he his ears. He exists pervading all things.

“ 17. They know him to be the source of the power of all the senses, but himself devoid of all senses ; the Lord and Guide of all, the great Refuge of all.

“ 18. The Controller of all worlds, of moving and unmoving things, exists in the city of nine gates (the body) as the transmigrating soul, and perceives external objects.

“ 19. He is without hands or feet ; yet he walks and handles, he sees without eyes and hears without ears. He knows all things knowable, but there is no one to know him. They call him the first and great Person.

“ 20. The Self, smaller than the small, greater than the

great, is hidden in the heart of every person. One who is without sorrow sees the Lord, free from all desires, and his glory, by the *grace* of Providence.

" 21. I know that changeless, eternal and all-pervading being, the Self of all, because he is omnipresent, him whom the followers of Brahman describe as causing the cessation of births and whom they always adore."

Chapter IV.

" 1. The One, formless Being with his purposes hidden, who with various powers, creates many forms ; from whom the world rises in the beginning and to whom it returns at the end,—may he grant us good understanding!

" 2. It is he who is fire, who is the sun and who is also the moon. It is he who is every bright thing. He is Brahma, (the cosmic soul), he is water, and he is Prajapati (the Lord of Creatures,—the first embodied Being).

" 3. Thou art woman, and thou art man. Thou art son and thou also art daughter. Thou, as an old man, walkest with the help of a stick. Thou art born with thy face on all sides.

" 4. Thou art the blue fly and green bird with red eyes. Thou art the cloud, the seasons and the seas. Thou art infinite and pervadest all, from whom all the worlds have arisen.

" 5. The one unborn (Nature) red, white and black, bearing many creatures and uniform,—some unborn (soul) lies near her and enjoys her, while some other unborn (soul), abandons her after she has been enjoyed."

This is one of the famous verses of our Upanishad, because it formed for a long time a bone of contention between Vedanta and Sankhya philosophers. The Sankhyas admit two principles, the *Purusha*, the absolute subject, and the *Prakriti* generally translated as nature. The Vedanta philosophers admit nothing but the one Absolute Subject and look upon nature as due to a power inherent in that subject.

The later Sankhyas, therefore, who are as anxious as the Vedantins to find authoritative passages in the Veda confirming their opinions, appeal particularly to this among other passages, to show that their view of *Prakriti* as an independent power is supported by the Veda.

“6. Two birds, related to each other, and friends, are sheltered in the same tree. One of them eats sweet fruits, while the other looks on without eating.”

The Sankhya doctrine of God or Purusha being only the witness and not the actor is to be found in germ in this verse.

“7. Man attached to the same tree, is deluded and grieves through want of power. When he sees the other, the adored Lord and his glory, he becomes free from grief.

“8. The unchangeable, supreme and infinite Being, sung in the *Rik* verses, in whom the gods live,—what shall we do with the *Rik* who does not know him? Those only who know him are satisfied.

“9. That from which the Lord of illusion has created all this,—the Vedas, the sacrifices with clarified butter, the sacrifices with the Soma juice, the vows, whatever is and whatever will be, and all that the Vedas speak of, to that the other (the individual self) is bound by illusion.”

It is impossible, says Max-Muller, to find terms corresponding to *Maya* and *Mayin*. *Maya* means making, or art, but as all making or creating so far as the Supreme Self is concerned is phenomenal only or mere illusion, *maya* conveys at the same time the sense of illusion. In the same manner, *mayin* is the maker, the artist but also the magician or juggler. What seems intended by the verse is that from the Akshara, which corresponds to Brahman, all proceeds, whatever exists or seems to exist, but that the actual creator or the author of all emanation is *Isa*, the Lord, who, as Creator, is acting through *maya* or *devatmasakti*.

“10. Know *Maya* (illusion) to be Nature, and the

master of illusion to be the great Lord. By his form is all this world pervaded.

“ 11. The One who superintends all natural causes, from whom all this rises and to whom it returns, he who sees that adorable God, the Regulator and Giver of boons, obtains this (intuitively felt) peace for ever.

“ 12. Rudra, who is the Source and Power of the Gods, the Lord of all, the Omniscient,—see him born as *Hiranyagarbha*, may he grant us good understanding!

“ 13. He who is the Lord of the gods, in whom the worlds rest, who guides these bipeds and quadrupeds,—we worship that God with oblations of clarified butter.

“ 14. He who knows the subtlest of the subtle, him who is seated in the depths of this world of illusion, the Creator of the world, the Many-formed, the One who encircles the world, the Good, obtains everlasting peace.

“ 15. He preserves this world while time lasts, he is the Lord of all, hidden in all things, to whom the Brahmana sages and the gods are united, (One who knows him breaks the fetters of death).

“ 16. When one knows him who is subtle like the film over clarified butter, the Good, hidden in all things, the One God who encircles the world, is freed from all bonds.

“ 17. This God, the Maker of all, the Great-souled, is always seated in the heart of all persons. He is revealed by the heart, by a sure understanding and by meditation. They who know him become immortal.

“ 18. When darkness is removed, there is neither day nor night, neither being nor nothing, but the Good alone. He is unchangeable, he is adored by the sun. It is from him that the ancient wisdom flows.

“ 19. No one can grasp him either above, below or in the middle. There is no image (or comparison) of him whose name is Great Glory.

“ 20. He has no form visible to the eye ; no one sees

him with the eye. Those who know him thus by the heart and by meditation become immortal.

“21. “Thou art unborn,”—with these words one who is in terror takes refuge in thee. O Rudra, protect me ever with that auspicious face of thine.”

Chapter V.

“1. In the Supreme Brahman, unchangeable and infinite, in whom knowledge and ignorance lie hidden, ignorance is the cause of embodied existence, and knowledge of immortality. But he who regulates knowledge and ignorance is different from them.

“2. It is the one who superintends every cause, all forms and all germs, who sustains with knowledge the wise Kapila, the first born and who saw him born.”

“9. The individual self is to be known as a hundredth part of the hundred part of the point of a hair, yet is worthy of obtaining infinitude.

“10. It is neither male nor female nor is it neuter. It is protected by whatever body it takes.

“11. The individual self is born and grows by the effect of desire, touch, vision and attachment; and at successive times and in various places assumes forms according to its deeds.

“12. The individual soul covers many forms, gross and subtle by its *gunas*. By the bodily properties and the effects of the deeds done by these forms, the connecting soul itself appears small.”

Chapter VI.

“1. Some learned men, deluded, call Nature and others time, the cause of all. But it is the power of God manifest in the world by which this Brahma-wheel is being moved.

“2 Who is conscious, the Maker of time, the Source of the *gunas* and all-knowing, and by whom all this is always pervaded. The earth, water, fire, air and ether,—all these are manifested as work regulated by him.”

" 5. He is seen as the Beginning, the Cause of all connecting causes, above the three times (present, past and future), and without parts. Having first worshipped that adorable God, whose form is the world, and who is both cause and effect, as seated in his heart, (the worshipper obtains liberation)."

" 10. May the one Lord who has, out of his own nature covered himself like a spider with threads derived from Nature, enable us to enter into Brahman!

" 11. That one God is hidden in all things ; he is omnipresent and the Inner Self of all. He superintends all work and lives in all beings. He is the Witness, the Inspirer, detached and above the *gunas*.

" 12. He who is the one Mover of many inactive things, who makes the one germ manifold,—those wise men who see him in themselves obtain everlasting peace, and not others.

" 13. The Eternal among eternal things, the Consciousness of conscious things, who though one, dispenses to many their objects of desire,—one who knows that God, the cause who is knowable by metaphysical knowledge and concentration of mind is freed from all bonds.

" 14. The sun does not shine there, nor do the moon and the stars. These lightnings do not shine there ; How can this fire ? After that shining One alone do all shine ; all this shines by its light."

" 16. He is the Maker of all, the all-knowing, the Self-subsistent, the Maker of time, endowed with the *gunas*, omniscient, the Lord of Nature and of the soul, the regulator of the *gunas* and the cause of the preservation, bondage and liberation of all."

" 21. By the power of his own austere course of discipline and by the **grace** of God, the wise Svetasvatara spoke to the revered anchorites of the most holy Brahman devoutly worshipped by the sages.

“ 22. This most secret science, taught in the *Vedanta* in ancient times should not be imparted to a person of restless character, nor to an unworthy son or disciple.”

This section clearly establishes that the writers and interpreters of the *Upanishads* contemplated God in two ways, as immanent and as transcendent—as embodied in the various objects of the world, and as beyond these objects. For an exposition of this subject, please see Chapter IV of Part I of this Manual. The Deity is one and the same and there is no contradiction between His two aspects related by the Rishi in this section.

CHAPTER XII. THE TAITTIREYA UPANISHAD.

This Upanishad which consists of three Vallis (creepers or sections) proclaims God as *Anandam*, Love itself. For an exposition of its teachings, please see Chapter XV of Part I of this Manual. The first Valli is more or less archaic and is not of much Vedantic importance.

The Second Valli.

“ 1. *Aum*. He who knows Brahman obtains the most High. Of that it is said :—He who knows Brahman, the True, the Conscious, the Infinite, as hidden in the heart, the highest heaven, enjoys all objects of desire with the all-knowing Brahman. Verily from this Self came out ether, from ether air, from air fire ; from fire water ; from water the earth ; from the earth herbs ; from herbs food ; from food seed ; from seed man. This man consists of the essence of food. Of him, this is the head (pointing out) this the right arm ; this the left arm ; this the middle part ; this the back part and the support of that (man as consisting of food), the following verse is given—

“ 2. Verily, all creatures that live on the earth, are born of food, they live on food, and then at the end, return to it, for food is the first-born of all things. Therefore is food called the universal remedy. Verily, those who worship food

as Brahman, obtain all food. Because food is the first-born of all creatures, therefore it is called the universal remedy. All creatures are born of food, and being born, they grow on food ; it is eaten by creatures and it eats them ; and hence it is so called.

Verily, there is an inner self consisting of life, different from this self consisting of the essence of food. This (*i.e.* the self consisting of the essence of food) is filled by that. Verily, this (*i.e.* the self consisting of life) is also of the form of man. This is of the form of man as that is. *Prana* (the up-going breath) is the head ; *Vyana* (the back-going breath) is its right arm ; *Apana* (the down-going breath) is its left arm. Ether is its middle part. The earth is its back part and support. Of that the following verse is given :—

“ 3. The gods live through *Prana*. So do men and the beasts. Because *Prana* is the life of creatures, therefore it is called the life of all. Those who worship *Prana* as Brahman obtain full life. Because *Prana* is the life of creatures, therefore it is called the life of all. The embodied self of the former (sheath) is also that of the latter. Verily, there is an inner self consisting of the sensorium, different from this self consisting of the essence of life. This (*i.e.*, the self consisting of the essence of life) is filled by that. Verily, this (*i.e.* the self consisting of the sensorium) is also of the form of man. This is of the form of man as that is. *Yajus* is its head. *Rik* is its right arm. *Saman* its left arm. The Brahmana is its middle part. The Atharva hymns are its back part and support. Of that the following Verse is given :—

“ 4. He who knows the bliss of Brahman, from whom words with the mind turn away, not finding him, never fears. The embodied self of the former sheath is also that of the latter. Verily, there is an inner self consisting of the understanding different from this self consisting of the sensorium. This (*i.e.* the self consisting of the sensorium) is filled by

that. Verily, this (*i.e.* the self consisting of the understanding) is also of the form of man. This is of the form of man as that is. Faith is its head. The right is its right arm. Truth is its left arm; Yoga (concentration) its middle part; the understanding its back part and support. Of that the following verse is given:—

“5. The understanding offers sacrifices. It also does righteous deeds. All the gods worship the understanding as their superior—as Brahman (Or, the mental powers serve the understanding as their source). If one knows the understanding as Brahman and does not swerve from him, he gives up, with the body, all sins born of the body and obtains all desirable things. The embodied self of the former sheath is also that of the latter. Verily, there is an inner self consisting of bliss different from this self consisting of the understanding. This (*i.e.*, the self consisting of the understanding) is filled by that. Verily, this (*i.e.*, the self consisting of bliss) is also of the form of man. This is of the form of man as that is. The pleasant is its head. Joy is its right arm. Rejoicing is its left arm. Bliss is its middle part. Brahman is its back part and support. Of that the following verse is given:—

“6. If any one thinks Brahman to be non-existent, he himself becomes non-existent. If any one thinks that Brahman exists, the knowers of Brahman know that one to be existing. The embodied self of the former sheath is also that of the latter. Then (the disciple asks these) questions after the preceptor's lecture:—

“Does any ignorant person reach that world after death? Does any knowing person reach that world? (The answer is). He (Brahman) wished—“Let me become many, let me be born. He meditated. Having meditated he created (*lit.* gave out) all this—whatever there is. Having created it, he entered into it. Having entered into it, he became *sat* (what has form) and *tyat* (what is formless), the defined and the undefined, the supported and the unsupported, the

sentient and the non-sentient, the real and the apparent. The True became whatever there is. Therefore is he called the True. Of that the following verse is given :—

“7. Verily, this (world) was non-existent in the beginning. Out of that arose the existent. That (Brahman) made itself. Therefore, is it called self-made. That which is self-made is verily joy. It is by gaining joy that the creature becomes happy. Who could breathe, who could live, if this blissful one did not exist in the heart? It is this who gives happiness. It is only when the creature gains an immovable footing on this invisible, incorporeal, inscrutable, and self-supported One that he becomes fearless. When, however, he makes even the slightest difference in that, then there is fear for him. That itself becomes the source of fear to the learned but unknowing person.....***.”

“9. From whom words with the mind, return not finding him—he who knows the bliss of (that) Brahman fears nothing. Verily, this thought does not afflict him—“Why did I not do the good? Why did I do the evil?” He who knows this pleases his self with both these. Yea, with both these does he please himself. This is the Upanishad.”

Third Valli.

“1. Bhrigu the son of Varuna, approached his father Varuna and said, “Sir, instruct me about Brahman.” He said in reply, “Food (or matter), life, the eye, the ear, the sensorium and speech (are means of realising Brahman).” He further said to Bhrigu,—“From which these creatures are born, through which they, being born, live and into which they return and enter, seek to know that well. That is Brahman.” He went through a meditation. Having gone through a meditation—

“2. He knew *food* (or matter) to be Brahman. For, from food are these creatures born, through food do they being born, live and into food do they return and enter. Having known this, he again approached his father Varuna

and said, "Sir, instruct me about Brahman." Varuna said to him, "Seek to know Brahman through meditation. Meditation is (the way to) Brahman." He went through a meditation. Having gone through a meditation—

"3. He knew *life* to be Brahman. For, from life are these creatures born, through life do they, being born, live and into life do they return and enter. Having known this, he again approached his father, Varuna, and said, "Sir, instruct me about Brahman." Varuna said to him, "Seek to know Brahman through meditation. Meditation is (the way to) Brahman." He went through a meditation. Having gone through a meditation—

"4. He knew the *sensorium* to be Brahman. For, from the sensorium are these creatures born ; through the sensorium do they being born, live and into the sensorium do they return and enter. Having known this, he again approached his father Varuna, and said, "Sir, instruct me about Brahman." Varuna said to him, "Seek to know Brahman through meditation. Meditation is (the way to) Brahman." He went through meditation. Having gone through a meditation—

"5. He knew the *understanding* to be Brahman. For, from the understanding are these creatures born, through the understanding do they, being born, live and into the understanding do they return and enter. Having known this, he again approached his father and said, "Sir, instruct me about Brahman." Varuna said to him, "Seek to know Brahman through meditation. Meditation is the way to Brahman." He went through a meditation. Having gone through a meditation—

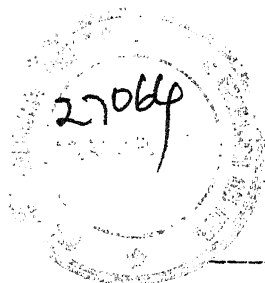
"6. He knew *bliss* to be Brahman. For, from bliss are these creatures born, through bliss do they, being born, live, and into bliss do they return and enter. This science named after Bhrigu and Varuna, is established in the highest heaven (*i.e.*, the highest revelation of reason). He who knows this is established (in Brahman), becomes possessed of food and

becomes the eater of food (i.e., healthy), great in progeny, cattle and Brahmic (or Vedic) splendour. He becomes great in renown."

For the profoundest insight into the heart of the Universe, this Upanishad may well be considered as the highest landmark in the march of thought in the Upanishadic literature. Considering the age in which the Upanishad was composed and its hoary antiquity, we cannot but marvel at the vision of the Rishi who realised love as the ultimate Reality of the Universe through self-knowledge intensified by deep meditation. This exalted and ennobling vision even in this enlightened and scientific age of philosophical and theological reconstruction, claims the admiration and wins the homage of every human heart, every human head, and is the crowning glory of the Vedanta of Hinduism, of which every one born a Hindu should be eternally proud.

JAI SATCHIDANANDA HARIH !

Victory to th God of Truth and Substance,
Wisdom and Light, Bliss and Beatitude.



QV1:24
— 550